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LEARNING TO PRAY

Many volumes have been written on prayer by more or less competent practitioners of it. No one, of course, can discuss the philosophy of prayer intelligently without having a first-hand knowledge of it. And a first hand knowledge of prayer one can have only after one has acquired by long and devout practice the spirit and the habit of it. One certainly has not mastered the art of prayer if he does not practically pray always, sanctify and consecrate everything with prayer, find comfort and delight in it, and strength for overcoming every kind of temptation. It is idle to say that one cannot pray always. Just as a man can habitually entertain certain thoughts, become completely absorbed by them, so he can develop and cultivate the spirit and the habit of practically continuous prayer.

The power and the value of prayer are hardly appreciated even by those who praise and recommend it. They do not feel sure of what prayer will do for a man. Our Lord promised to give us whatever we may need provided, conscious of our weakness and insufficiency, we ask for it humbly with confidence and perseverance. *Prov.* 30:5 says: "Every word of God is fire-tried: he is a buckler to those who hope in him." Why, then, do some of us have misgivings and doubt whether he will graciously hear us? He may let us wait a while and so test our faith, but he will not at last disappoint us and refuse to hear us. The woman who pleaded for her daughter was sorely tried. Our Lord seemingly refused outright to grant her request, but she kept on pleading. Praising her faith and perseverance he at last granted her request. No matter how things may look, how desperate they may seemingly be, our Lord will always keep his promise to hear us. *Jer.* 29:13 says: "You shall pray to me and I will hear you, when you shall seek me with all your heart." Therefore, *Prov.* 3:5-6 says: "Have confidence in the Lord with all thy heart and lean not on thy own prudence. In all thy ways think on him and he will direct thy steps." And *Ecclus.* 35:21 says: "The prayer of him that humbles himself shall pierce the clouds." The king in Hamlet, however, says to the point:

"My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words without thoughts never to heaven go."

It is all a matter of education, which is a process of drilling, repeating, and emphasising. We can become proficient in anything to which we can educate ourselves religiously because we all have a vocation for living religiously. Some doubt or question the results of this self-education, though the process is simple enough and always effective. If, for instance, you make it a deliberate point always to emphasise the petition of the Our Father "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" you will gradually acquire the habit of always strengthening and intensifying this petition. And if you set yourself the definite and deliberate task of always making your genuflections devoutly, not in the slipshod, slovenly, and mechanical way in which most people make them habitually, and vitalise them with devout and intense aspirations, with acts of faith in the Real Presence, acts of thanksgiving for Holy Communion, acts of sorrow for sin, acts of vicarious amendment for the thoughtlessness of the many, and other similar acts according to your momentary inspiration and religious moods, your faith in the Real Presence will increase perceptibly. And if you bow to the crucifix as you enter or leave a room, and look with sympathy at the tortured body of the Redeemer, your love for him and your gratitude for the Redemption will grow apace and make you ever more feelingly religious.

So there are many little religious practices and exercises, like the taking of Holy Water, signs of the cross, etc., concerning which many people act mechanically, thoughtlessly, and even irreverently. Some are ignorant of the educational and religious value of such things and practices, or they lack faith in their efficacy. They are not impressed by the scriptural declaration (*Ecclus.* 19:1) that "he who contemns small things, shall fall little by little," lose religious ground progressively, and become religiously ever more insensitive. The Apostle (*Gal.* 6:7) warns us: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked. For what things a man shall sow, those also he shall reap." You may have made many religious efforts without getting satisfactory and commensurate results because there has been much fluctuating, drifting, and trifling in your efforts. To get definite and notable results you have to put an end to habitual

drifting and trifling and concentrate on definite exercises, and cultivate them with fidelity. If you faithfully do so, you will soon come to live on a higher religious level and acquire the spirit and the habit of continuous prayer.

What will prayer do for a man who perseveres in it? It will spiritualise his mind and strengthen him against all kinds of temptation. It will enable him to solve problems which no merely human wisdom could solve. It will steady and console him in his griefs and sorrows. It will fortify him against human respect which so commonly paralyses a man spiritually. It will enable him to smile when misfortune overtakes him. It will make him humble. It will enable him to make the most of his time, for every moment of which he will have to render a strict account. A man who has the spirit and habit of prayer will sanctify his life and activity with numberless aspirations. It will also help him to overcome discouragement and sadness, according to St. James (5:15) who says: "Is any of you sad? Let him pray." Prayer is simply a panacea which never fails and is always an effective remedy for all human needs.

A never failing sense of religion and an adequate appreciation of it are impossible without the spirit and the habitual and intelligent practice of prayer. Here we have some reason why so many people are and remain hopelessly immature in a religious way. No matter how much education a man may get in the letter of religion, in the theory and theology of it, he is and remains religiously weak and immature, if his education in the drilling and practice of prayer is neglected. A man may have but little intelligence and but little capacity for what is commonly understood by education, but in the matter of religion and, in particular, of prayer he has an unlimited capacity for development. Sound religious sense and feelings, religious maturity are the result of practical religious living, of sanctifying and consecrating all of life and of activity with prayer. If there is anything a man needs or wishes to obtain and, conscious of his helplessness, he prays with unwavering confidence that God, in his love and wisdom, may help him to obtain it, he will not be disappointed. If he is the slave of some ingrown evil habit, grace will not be denied to him for overcoming it, provided he prays with unfaltering confidence for the graces which he needs, if he has enough good will to make

him heroic in prayer. Without some heroism he will never get far in religion. He is more than foolish, he is afflicted with absolute madness if he does not put absolute confidence in God who said (*Para.* 5:2): "You shall pray to me and I will hear you." St. James, however, warns us not to expect to have our prayers answered, if we do not have an absolute and unfaltering trust in God.

All education is a slow and gradual process. Every time a man does anything religiously, puts spirit into it and vitalises it with devout aspirations, he grows religiously stronger, though he may not be conscious of it. Faith and serious good will are about the only requirements for this effective religious education. *Demonstratio optima est experientia.* All learning is a matter of evolution. Gradually, though ever so imperceptibly, prayer will develop and mature a man and put the stamp of religion on his personality. He will keep on becoming religiously stronger instead of drifting and declining and becoming progressively weaker in religion and ever more mediocre and lukewarm.

Just as education is a process of evolution, so is prayer. The spirit and habit of prayer and the eventual mastery of prayer are the certain end results of self-education in prayer and of the continuous practice of it. No teacher can do much more than show the candidate for education the way and, as far as the pupil is docile, drill him in the technique of it, but the candidate himself must have a sincere desire for it and make necessary and persevering efforts. Slow results discourage many who give up without trying hard enough and long enough, but those who are serious enough to keep on, in spite of initial difficulties, always achieve the desired results. A convinced and mountain-moving faith is the end result of continuous prayer and of living by faith for years. The great problem is perseverance. Confidence in God's promises and in the power of prayer grow by being steadily exercised. God cannot and will not fail to answer our prayers if we keep on praying and do not allow discouragement to weaken us. Always remember that "every word of God is fire-tried."

"Pray without ceasing" says St. Paul (*I Thess.* 5:17). This must be possible for us because God cannot command, and certainly does not demand, what is impossible for us. He is ever with those who persevere, ready to prove that nothing is impossible for those

who have a never failing and unfaltering trust in Him, in His power and in His readiness to do for us what seems impossible. The only problem for us is learning to pray, but the solution of this problem is within every man's capacity and is simple enough for him who, instead of trifling and drifting, concentrates on definiteness and unfaltering continuity. The man who makes much of the little religious exercises and practices, appreciates them and cultivates them with unbroken continuity, puts the necessary pressure on himself for being faithful in the continued practice of them, will succeed gloriously and become a master in the spirit and art of prayer.

Most of the powers and forces available to us can be measured and their limits can be definitely established. We know, to a definite degree, how much to expect from an electric current or a gasoline-driven motor, but the power of one force available to us has never been measured nor can it be defined. This force is prayer. So much we know that, as we make use of it with humble and unfaltering confidence, the response is always abundant and satisfying. In his remarks on religion Dr. Creighton wrote: "Religion is concerned with the science of life, the greatest and certainly the most important of all sciences. A man may ignore other sciences and things, but there is one thing or science which every man must face and this is the science of life. It is the science of life with which religion is concerned and religion is largely a matter of prayer."

Those whose own interior life and efficiency as priests will largely depend on their mastery and habits of prayer, and on their ability to train the people in the practice of prayer, to make them love prayer and to cultivate the habit of praying intelligently, will fail, in spite of their knowledge and accomplishments as theologians, if they themselves are not masters of the art of prayer and do not cultivate it habitually. Cicero wrote critically and sarcastically of those *qui docent alios quod ipsi experti non sunt.* In matters of religion and of morality we expect those who try to teach us to have an experimental knowledge of what they are trying to teach us.

An African missionary relates the story of an old Negro who, before his conversion, had been a priest in an idol-worshipping cult. Gradually the old man had become a daily communicant. After receiving Holy Communion he always prostrated himself

before the tabernacle with his forehead flat on the floor, remaining in this position for twenty minutes and sometimes for half an hour. Edified by the fervor of the old Negro, the missionary asked him for the motive of his action. The old man answered: "When I adored the idols I prostrated myself before them to the very dust. Should I do less now when I adore the true God and thank him for allowing me to receive him in Holy Communion?"

Does our faith inspire us with as much reverence in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament? Are we making as much effort in the service of God as we are making in the service of our miserable little idols? We are not always in the mood for prayer. At times we are not up to par mentally and spiritually. The method and practice of making devout aspirations and putting spirit and intensify into our religious practices and exercises will greatly help us to overcome such spells of aridity when every effort is painful labor. Moreover, it is comforting to know that prayer which requires an effort and is persisted in, even against disinclination, is more precious religiously, a better proof of our faith and, in consequence, more pleasing to God than prayer which is full of sweetness and requires but little effort. God sometimes tries us to make sure that we are seeking Him and not our own satisfaction or something else.

We have made many religious efforts without getting commensurate results. If we wish and hope to get definite results and to become increasingly more religious, we have to put an end to the misery of drifting and trifling and fluctuating, concentrate on definite practices and cultivate them with unfaltering fidelity. Without some heroism we cannot expect to get very far in prayer. If we emphasise and vitalise our genuflexions and other religious practices we will quickly come to live on a higher religious level. Devout and continuous practice will result in the mastery of prayer, in the spirit and habit of it. We will be done with that dilettante religious living which is so common even among those who are considered reasonably religious. Therefore, "be instant in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving" (*Eph.* 5:29). We will become conscious of how true are the words of *Prov.* 8:35: "I love them that love me, and they who in the morning early watch for me shall find me sitting at the door. And he that shall

find me, shall find life." So we may practically become contemplatives, though we are still doing the world's work.

Why do men make so amazingly little of prayer and neglect it so commonly? Why do we have to insist so endlessly on the necessity, the comforts and the benefits of prayer, considering that God promised to hear our prayers, provided we continue to trouble Him with our petitions? Of course, we must not expect that God, in His wisdom and goodness and love for us, will give us what would harm us.

And why do we usually pray so listlessly when we do pray? St. Bernard wrote that "a person who prays carelessly and still expects to be heard is like to a man who pours bad grain into a mill and expects to receive good flour in return." Absolute and unquestioning confidence is one of the most essential and effective qualities that prayer must have. Sometimes God may remain seemingly deaf to our petitions, but if we continue to pray with humble confidence, He will not disappoint us in the end. Therefore, "Have confidence in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not on thy own prudence. In all thy ways think on Him and He will direct thy steps" (*Prov.* 3:15).

What do the Sacred Scriptures say about prayer? Here are a few quotations that testify to its effectiveness. *Jer.* 29:12-13 says: "You shall pray to me and I will hear you. You shall seek and you shall find me, if you seek me with all your heart; but if you forsake me, I shall forsake you." *Mark* 11:24: "All things whatsoever you ask when you pray, believe that you shall receive, and it shall come unto you." *James* 1:5-7: "If any of you want wisdom, let him ask it of God who gives to all abundantly and upbraids not: and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea which is moved and carried about by the wind. Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." *James* 4:8: "Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you." *Ecclus.* 18:22: "Let nothing hinder thee from praying always." *James* 5:13: "Is any of you sad? Let him pray." *James* 4:8: "Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to thee."

These are only a few of the many comforting references to prayer in the Bible. They will, however, affect us but little and remain

largely ineffective, if we do not meditate on them and mature some definite resolutions based on them. We ought to advertise prayer aggressively, as the world advertises its goods. Considering the rather general neglect of prayer we are justified in concluding that there is something wrong with our education in prayer. We seem not to convince those whom we are teaching that prayer holds the solution for practically all their problems and troubles. At any rate, we seem not to succeed in teaching them effective ways and means of prayer.

Our own public praying is too commonly slipshod, slovenly, mechanical, and perfunctory. So we are not convincing the people that we ourselves believe in the power and effectiveness of prayer and that we are intensely interested in it. Not having mastered the art of prayer and not being accomplished in its practice, we are inefficient in such efforts as we are making to train our people in the art of prayer. Usually we begin our own praying with a sign of the cross which, as we make it, is little better than a caricature. And it is certainly not an inspiring example for those who are watching us.

Advertising is an art. There is endless repetition in it, but no staleness. It always aims at freshness and originality. Do we, in our teaching and preaching efforts, match the inventiveness of the advertising writers? Some of us, a few minutes before preaching time, look frantically for a convenient and appealing subject. If we knew our holy religion in its practical aspects and had that appreciation of it which is the effect of its serious practice, we should never be at a loss for an informing, striking, and appealing sermon subject. We simply can not hope to teach religion effectively, if we do not practice it effectively.

Sincere prayer is always a confession and exercise of humility. We pray because we feel helpless without God's support. Our faith and vocation are God's free and unmerited gifts, but we cannot remain faithful in our state and vocation without God's sustaining grace. Having given us so much, without any merit on our part, God will go to the limit in supporting us and keeping us faithful in our vocation and the work committed to us, but He will not force His graces on us. We have to ask for them. Whenever a priest or a religious fails in his vocation, he fails through his own fault because he neglected prayer and reasonable self-

discipline and self-denial. If, under the stresses of life, a priest or religious doubts whether he ever had a true vocation, the necessary qualifications for his vocation, his doubts are self-deceptions and make-believe excuses. The simple fact always is that he neglected to make the most of the means at hand for making a success of his life in the priesthood or religious life. He neglected prayer and penance. He ignored our Lord's declaration "without me you can do nothing." Without God's strong sustaining grace a priest can not deal successfully with the temptations that beset him on every side, though he may never leave the protection of a religious house. If his line of work is cast in the ever-tempting and dangerous world, he is always in mortal peril. He needs the strength which enabled Galahad to say "my strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure." He will never have such a pure heart nor can he be reasonably safe, if he does not systematically and consistently cultivate the spirit of prayer and acquire the habit of it. On all sides of him the Siren voices are singing. Therefore, he simply must acquire the habit of practically always praying and of sanctifying all his time and work and efforts with humble prayer. St. Paul (*Col.* 3:17) admonishes us: "All whatsoever you do in word or in works, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." A priest or religious whose mind is spiritualised by prayer and who cultivates the habit of it, is reasonably safe, but without the spirit and habit of prayer he is not safe, as St. Alphonsus assures us, because he is neglecting the one specific and most powerful means for protecting himself against the world, the flesh, and the devil. The plea *volo, sed non valeo* has here no standing because God, by virtue of His promise, is bound in justice to sustain him with His grace, if he humbly, confidently and perseveringly asks for it. God's grace is always sufficient and is denied to no man who asks for it humbly and perseveringly.

Of course, if a man really wishes to develop the spirit of prayer and to acquire the habit of it, he must put continuous pressure on himself. He must cultivate serious self-discipline. All this is easy enough and demands no more from any man than a serious religious will. If he faithfully cultivates the little religious practices and exercises, they will prove infallibly effective for his gradually acquiring the spirit and also the habit of prayer. He that makes

much of the little things, takes pains with them, will become ever stronger and religiously more mature. One who makes himself believe that he cannot acquire the habit of fidelity in such little and easy things, deliberately deceives himself and will continue to drift and to trifle religiously. He will remain a mere dilettante in religious living. Trifles make for perfection. St. Thomas remarks *qualis unusquisque est, talis finis videtur ei.*

Life is usually not made up of great sacrifices, but of little continuous sacrifices in which unbroken fidelity makes for heroism. Whether we like it or not, a most valuable part of our education consists in cultivating the ability to make ourselves do what we ought to do when we ought to do it. Why are so many of us so weak of will? Why do we lack spiritual driving power. Do we lack strong enough incentives? Professional men sometimes make immense sacrifices and efforts because they are impelled by the driving power of success in their profession. Do we lack such an incentive and an even stronger motive? Is it because we are mostly independent economically? Is the love of God a weaker incentive than success or the love of money? Prayer will develop the proper incentive and make it heroic.

Alas! "I called and you refused. I stretched out my hands and there was none that regarded" (*Prov.* 1:24). Isaias (65:2) pleads in the name of God: "I spread forth my hands all the day to an unbelieving people that walk, after their own hearts, in a way that is not good."

Abandoning inept and foolish talking, a man with an imagination spiritualised by prayer will, instead of allowing his imagination to run wild, make fervent and intense aspirations. *Vacare Deo non est otium, sed negotiorum negotium* says St. Jerome. And a Latin writer says *otio qui nescit uti, plus habet negotii quam qui negotiosus est in negotio.* The language of a praying man will never be vulgar because the spirit of prayer is incompatible with an undisciplined tongue. He who progressively cultivates prayer becomes ever more intimate with God who is "amazingly familiar with those who seek and love him," as the *Imitation* says. Gradually a man of prayer will acquire a spiritual culture that protects him in all his contacts with the world. No worldly attraction is likely to seduce a man who is well schooled in prayer and has a praying mind. Prayer is certainly always the most effective means

of religious education; it will develop understanding and appreciation of religion as well as religious sense and convictions. A man who has the spiritual culture developed by prayer is proof against the seductions of "saint-seducing gold," of which Shakespeare says that "though authority is a stubborn bear, it is often led by the nose with gold." No worldly attraction is likely to seduce of a man schooled in prayer. When things look desperate and men do not know what to do or where to find help, the praying man seeks help from Him who always helps those who turn to Him with confidence in their needs. He will always give them the help they may need or He will give them the strength to bear what they could not bear without His sustaining grace.

An adequate appreciation of religion is impossible without the spirit and habit of prayer. The chief reason why so many people remain religiously so mediocre and immature is because they do not cultivate the spirit and habit of prayer. We are all, more or less unconsciously, affected by the human atmosphere in which we are living. It is not easy to resist current opinions, practices, and fashions. We see everything, we hear everything, we read the daily papers and everywhere we are exposed to the pressure of the radio and television. So we come to cultivate distractions until they become habits which lessen our capacity for prayer. With good will and perseverance, however, we can become ever more proficient in prayer, because education is a process of repeating and emphasizing. There is actually no limit to which we can educate ourselves in the practice of prayer and of practical religion.

Thomas Carlyle was one day asked by the local minister: "What do you consider the most important thing for our church, Mr. Carlyle?" Without hesitation Carlyle answered: "A man who knows God not merely from hearsay." Some of us perhaps know God merely from hearsay. We have a knowledge of technical theology and yet merely a letter knowledge of God. We have not attained to any personal intimacy with God by means of prayer. The more a man prays, the more he thinks of God and talks to him, the more intimate he becomes with him. St. Chrysostom wrote: "If I notice that a person does not love prayer, I know that there is little good in him. He who does not pray, has no true life in him. A man is no better than his prayer."

Therefore, instead of drifting and trifling religiously concentrate on definiteness and continuity in prayer. Then compare the results with your old ways and habits. "By their fruits you shall know them." If a man wishes to become more than a mere cheer leader in religion he has to cultivate an intelligent spirit and habit of prayer.

We learn by doing. Every time we make a devout and intense aspiration in connection with some religious practice, we do something towards acquiring and stabilising the habit of prayer. In no other way we develop our familiarity with God so quickly and effectively and become more religious. Many of us do not, it is to be feared, appreciate prayer at its full value and, as a matter of fact, do not make enough intelligent use of it.

Mere mechanical or lip prayer has little value. If prayer is not thoughtful, intense, and intelligent it cannot have the value and the power and effects ascribed to it. The man who has really learned to pray has also mastered the business of meditation concerning which most people have much difficulty and, therefore, simply do not cultivate it. A man who has become a master in the art of prayer will agree with St. Augustine: *sola salus servire Deo, sunt caetera fraudes.*

WALTER STEHLE, O.S.B.

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AROUSING THE ZEAL OF OUR PEOPLE

The true Church of Christ is nearly two thousand years old. Her organization is enormous and world-wide. The latest report of her membership shows a total of 425,000,000. As the population of the world is doubling every hundred years, the Church also is growing rapidly through the natural increase of the Catholic families. At the same time the number of conversions is increasing. In Africa, for example, whole tribes wish to enter the Church. The Catholic Church has moreover the solemn promise of God that she will endure to the end of time. The gates of hell will never prevail against her.

Consciously or unconsciously the average Catholic is thus likely to have a sense of security which in some instances might also be described as smug spiritual self-sufficiency. It is hard to say this but it seems to be the truth because so many good people go their way with a very mediocre amount of self-sacrifice, prayer, and effort. At the same time they do little or nothing to help their neighbor or to spread the Faith.

By contrast the strange new sects which spring up so surprisingly and grow so fast have no background, no foundation and no assurance of endurance. They spring up, grow surprisingly, but they are destined to wither away because they have no root. Some of them, like the Communists, have the advantage of ruthless organization, pitiless regimentation. They all make utopian promises and appeal either to the sentimentality or the misguided philanthropy of mankind.

But what a perverted but ardent zeal their advocates sometimes show! Their perseverence, self-sacrifice, boldness, often surprise us. Some of them appeal deliberately to the principle of self-sacrifice. It is said that those who join the Jehovah's Witnesses are told that they are not lay folk, but ministers and are sent out with the admonition "Go and suffer for the cause! You will be maltreated, doors will be shut upon you, you may be beaten, but keep on distributing the literature, keep on preaching the millennium!" Who has not heard of the perseverence and self-immolation of the Communist young folk? How hard they work, how perseveringly they endure affronts and suspicions.

To return to the Jehovah's Witnesses, many of their workers serve without salary—only for board and lodging and a pittance for spending money. They work over-hours and spend their free time in bible study or in distributing literature. We may, of course, say that they are fanatics, that they go to extremes and this no doubt is true. But one cannot help wondering at the remarkable self-sacrifice and the courageous self-immolation which they practice for a cause which we know is hopeless and deluding.

When we consider the vast potential energy in our Catholic body, the great number of capable men and women, the many intelligent children even, who could take part in various Catholic apostolates, there must arise a desire to stir the will and well-ordered zeal of these potential workers in the harvest field of God.

In this country, the desire ought to be all the greater because the field is so ripe for the harvest. There is no country on earth which compares with ours in mission possibilities. The estimate has often been advanced that there are in this country about 70,000,000 people who are not affiliated to any denomination and about 30,000,000 more who are, or should be members of some Protestant denomination but who do not go to church.

As we have often pointed out, this multitude, 100,000,000, are tremendously influential. It is they who decide all the elections, because they form about two-thirds of all our population. It is they who supply most of the mothers and fathers of the coming generation. In their hands is at least two-thirds of our national life and of the family life of our people. Hence, to convert large numbers of them would be not only to bring them individually to the truth, but also go far toward saving this nation from irreligion and toward saving the world itself, which is now so dependent on us.

The vast majority of these 100,000,000 are hardly touched at present by any Catholic influence. They grow up and grow old and die without learning of the beauty of the Catholic Church. The Church has no contact with them except through the many Catholics who work with them in their places of business, who associate with them socially, who chat with them at casual meetings. It is through the ordinary Catholic and through him or her alone, that we can truly make contact with this great multitude and give them at least an opportunity of learning the truth.

Besides, there is a great multitude of Catholics who are not sufficiently instructed, who are not under Catholic influences. Many years ago, about the year 1916, in fact, shortly after I had founded the magazine, "The Queen's Work" and laid the foundation of the sodality movement in the United States, I made several studies of the influences at work on our Catholic people. The one that attracted the most attention was the study of the Catholic membership in the Y. M. C. A. I showed at that time by careful surveys, made by correspondence with the secretaries of the Y. M. C. A., that 40 per cent of the members were then Catholics. This created a furor in the Catholic publications and in Catholic circles. No one had dreamed that so many of our young people were under the influence of that non-Catholic organization.

It would be interesting to make another such survey at present. It would surely show that there are still a great number of Catholics in the Y. M. C. A. But apart from such non-Catholic affiliations there are certainly great multitudes of Catholic people who go to the public schools or other non-Catholic education institutions and who never adequately learn their Catholic faith.

The recent report of the Catechetical Instruction League showed that there are less than 4,000,000 Catholics in our Catholic schools, but that nearly 6,000,000 Catholics are in non-Catholic institutions. Some of these Catholic young people have good home training, and others contrive to learn their religion in some other way. But it is to be feared that great numbers, coming from homes in which Catholicity is not very strong, never really grasp the meaning of their faith and therefore easily fall away or lapse into the half-hearted practice of it.

There is no way of finding out how many such Catholics drift on the outskirts of the Faith. Years ago we proposed an imaginary chart of our Catholic population, depicting it as composed of four great concentric circles. In the inner circle is the great number of good, fervent Catholics. It is they who attend Mass, receive the Sacraments, hear the sermons, make the retreats, attend the missions, read Catholic literature, subscribe to Catholic charities and the missions. The second great circle consists of those whom we have called "half-hearted" Catholics. They still practice the bare essentials of their religion, go to Mass on Sunday, abstain on Fridays and make their Easter duty, but their heart is not

in their religious practices and they do nothing whatever to help Catholic activities or partake in the good works mentioned above.

The third great circle consists of the "drifters." They make their Easter duty now and then, go to Mass when they feel like it on Sunday, abstain occasionally on Fridays, but they are on the way out of the Church. The fourth great circle consists of the "fallen-away" and "ought-to-bes." They have given up their Catholic practices and are sometimes filled with animosity against priests and things Catholic, but in any event they can hardly call themselves Catholic any more. These latter two circles are filled with those who had no adequate opportunity for Catholic instruction or failed to make any for themselves.

There is, of course, a great fifth circle of non-Catholics in general and it might again be divided into the non-Catholics who are well disposed or indifferent to the Catholic religion and those who are its enemies. In the two outer circles, and one might also say in the fourth circle, are to be found the 100,000,000 of whom we have spoken. They are all open to some form of apostolate.

Studying the attitudes and activities of the inner circle of good Catholics, how many of them, shall we find, are true apostles? How many of them make any effort to spread the Faith, to attract the half-hearted Catholics to the inner circle of the fervent, to bring the drifters into Catholic practices, to seek and bring back to the fold the ought-to-bes and fallen-aways, to inform non-Catholics, friendly or unfriendly, about our holy religion?

There are many ways in which we can stir up the zeal of our good Catholic people who are potential apostles to the other circles of which we speak. Every one of our Catholic societies ought to take up some apostolic work. Our schools should encourage the children to practice some active works of zeal for the spread of the Church. Our great national organizations are in touch with many potential apostles. When we established the "Queen's Work" to chronicle the work of the sodalities for the Queen of Heaven, it was our purpose to encourage the organization of many sections. Each one was to encourage some form of Catholic apostolate and many of these sections were formed and still are operating. But it is still all too true that the efforts, good as they are, to organize our Catholic people, are in no way proportionate to the immense and pressing need.

Something much more effective must be done in this critical time, when the influence of the Church should be so much more effectively felt, to encourage our good Catholic people to enlist in the apostolate.

There is one simple and practical and easy means which we have been suggesting of late, one of many possible means of enlisting Catholics in the lay apostolate, which we call "The Leafleteers." It is indeed so simple that it might be despised by some who are in search of the solution of the problem of stirring up the zeal of our people. But it has proved effective and it can be tried by anyone with a minimum of expense of time and effort. It is the simple practice of distributing the little leaflets published by the Vista Maria Press at 10 West 17th Street, New York, which can be had for $2.00 per thousand in 90 different subjects, all of which are carefully prepared to induce the casual reader to pursue his investigation into Catholic principles and practices and the claims of the Church.

These leaflets can be used in a thousand ways—sent in letters to non-Catholic friends, left in the subway or street car or bus, in railroad stations or on trains, in telephone booths, wherever the happener-by may pick them up and read. Already about 28,000,000 are on their way all over the country and other parts of the world. Passed from hand to hand they are read when other, longer, pamphlets and books would not be looked at.

Any school child can learn the lay apostolate by distributing two or three of these leaflets every week, for which a few pennies a year will pay. Catholic organizations can distribute them to their members. One such organization after giving these leaflets out in a public park in one of our big cities during the summer, reported making one hundred contacts who were taking instructions in the Catholic religion.

The leaflets have been given out after Mass in parishes with the request that the people distribute them as best they can. They have been used in Catholic meetings and organizations. Some enthusiastic leafleteers give them out on street corners. Others enclose them in the correspondence of the societies and organizations for which they are responsible. Thus little by little they are getting into the hands and hearts of many people.

No doubt many others have better suggestions and we shall be very glad to hear of them. For the present our own little contribution to this great problem, this burning question, how shall we encourage the zeal of our Catholic people, would read something like this "Make them zealous and persevering leafleteers."

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FIFTY YEARS AGO

Quite appropriately the leading article in *The American Ecclesiastical Review* for October, 1903, is "The Ministry of the Angels." The author, Fr. W. R. Carson, of England, points out the congruity of an order of created spiritual beings, and then gives an excellent summary of the facts about the angels made known through revelation. He urges us to have a spirit of confidence in our guardian angels, quoting from St. Bernard: "They are faithful, they are prudent, they are powerful. Why should we fear?" . . . The editor, Father Heuser, contributes an article on "American Bishops and Polish Catholics," discussing a petition sent to the Holy See by a Congress of Polish Catholics requesting bishops of Polish nationality for the faithful of those districts where the Poles formed a large and proportionately influential part of the Catholic population. . . . The article "In Father Martin's Library," by Fr. Arthur Waldron, discusses the pros and cons of smoking by priests and seminarians. . . . Fr. Stang, of Providence, continues his series of articles on socialism. . . . In the "Studies and Conferences" section an anonymous correspondent treats of the "tipping" habit, noting that priests are exceptionally generous in this respect, but complaining that the habit has become an abuse, especially in Europe, where Americans have spoiled the servants by heavy tipping. . . . Another writer protests against the acceptance by priests of a stipend on the occasion of the Easter confession. This custom, he says, is sometimes found among Catholics of European origin, because of special conditions prevailing in their native lands, but, he adds: "There are no such reasons prevailing amongst us, and the priest who maintains a custom of this kind against the ordinance of his Bishop is guilty, not only of sin, but of graver scandals which dishonor the Church." . . .

F. J. C.

SEX EDUCATION: THE RIGHT AND DUTY OF PARENTS

"Sex Education" seems to this writer a misnomer for the Catholic ideal. "Sex" means the God-given quality of being male or female, which quality extends to minds, affections and will as well as to bodies. "Education" means the complex process of instructing, unfolding, developing and training all the inborn abilities of a child. "Sex Education" ought then to mean training a boy to be fully a man, and a girl to be really a woman. But most people think of sex education in terms of information concerning the process of human generation. The various plans of "sex education" merely add different facets to this basic idea of sex information.

The general thinking on sex education in the schools of education and psychology has changed down the years. Twenty-five years ago educators thought to give students all the facts of life plus a consideration of the venereal diseases. The mere intellectual understanding of the facts and dangers, it was hoped, would bring behavior up to a "socially acceptable" level. Such programs have failed dismally, so much so that Benjamin Gruenberg has said: "The [sex] behaviour of the child or the adult . . . is not in any significant degree the result of formal or informal instruction he has received. . . . Sex Education . . . is not a subject of instruction."[1]

In the more modern approach, the physiologists and doctors have ceded the helm to the psychologists. The new campaign intends to give the same "facts of life" in a good emotional atmosphere, as witness the three movies, *Human Beginnings*, *Human Growth*, and *Human Reproduction* originating from the Oregon Medical School. This is all to the good, but it is not good enough. The objective of these recent methods seems to be to avoid shocking the child, to inculcate a healthy emotional outlook towards sex in marriage and before marriage to keep within

[1] Benjamin Gruenberg in Geddes, D.P., and Cruie, E.: *About the Kinsey Report: Observations by Eleven Experts* (New York: New American Library), pp. 145, 148.

the bounds of "socially acceptable sex activity" whatever that might be.

The Catholic objective is more noble and more clear-sighted. Our objective is *chastity* for every boy and girl growing to maturity. Since chastity is the virtue which controls for married people and altogether excludes in the unmarried any voluntary venereal or sexual pleasure in thought, word, or deed—for Catholics, and indeed for any right thinking person, sex education should mean *chastity education*. Any approach which endangers the purity of a child before marriage, or makes him incapable of adjusting in marriage, should be opposed. Hence, both brash frankness and prudish hush-hush are inconceivable from a truly Christian point of view. Now, chastity is a virtue and it fits into the list of natural virtues—but we are not merely natural men and women—we have fallen supernatures. Solomon knew he could not be chaste without the help of God. Our moderns are far less wise. They think they can, with a few emotional helps. Good emotional attitudes are *helpful* for chastity but they are far from sufficient. We need God's grace and we must use all the means to attain it. The modern naturalistic approach, however much it has changed down the years, is still naturalistic and has been condemned constantly from the *Syllabus* of Blessed Pius X to the recent declaration of Pope Pius XII on September 24, 1951. In matters of sex education the condemnation was vividly summed up by Pius XI in his Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth:

> Far too common is the error of those who with a dangerous assurance and under an ugly term propagate a so-called sex education, falsely imagining they can forearm youth against the dangers of sensuality by means purely natural, such as a foolhardy initiation and precautionary instruction for all indiscriminately, even in public; and worse still, by exposing them at an early age to the occasions in order to accustom them, so it is argued, and as it were to harden them against such dangers.

Our Catholic approach to sex education demands more than facts and emotions. The Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, March 21, 1931, explained:

> [In sex education] special care is to be paid to the complete, solid, and continuous religious instruction of the youth of both sexes;

awakening in them a high regard and desire for, and love of, the angelical virtue; teaching them as a matter of supreme importance to be persevering in prayer, to make assiduous use of the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, to honor the holy purity of the Blessed Virgin Mother with filial devotion, and to commit themselves unreservedly to her protection, teaching them moreover to avoid dangerous reading, indecent scenic performances, wrong conversations and all other occasions of sin.

As Catholics, then, we need religious convictions, habitual moral practice, good emotional attitudes, and enough information to permit an understanding of the actions about which chastity is concerned. We need, in short, an integrated Christian philosophy of man.

Besides a philosophy, sex education needs a method. Good sex education must be first, *gradual*, because all learning is gradual; because a child's curiosity grows; because we must avoid both wakening a child's passions, and shocking his delicate sensibilities. Secondly, good chastity education must be *private*, because it must be adapted to the needs of each child, his or her own problems, rate of physical and emotional growth, types of temptation, environmental pressures. Third, chastity education must be *repeated*, for no child ever learned a fact or developed a virtue from one instruction or admonition. Fourth, such education must be *reviewed*, since in the years of learning and forgetting, time must be taken to put all the pieces of the puzzle together. Fifth, sex education must *meet* and *slightly anticipate* the needs of each child; too soon or too late can be equally disastrous. Lastly, good chastity education must *integrate* all knowledge, attitudes and virtues into a solid Catholic philosophy of daily life. The U.S. Army Medical Journal tells us: " . . . sexual behaviour patterns do not rise far above or fall far below, the level of our non-sexual behaviour patterns. . . . The tremendous challenge to sex education is that of character building and maturing, far more than instruction in the mechanics of sex hygiene."[2]

If you will admit all the norms mentioned for good chastity education—then parents, and parents only, can give adequate chastity formation. The school is not the place for either infor-

[2] Medical Technicians Bulletin, Supplement to U. S. Armed Forces Medical Journal, July-August, 1951.

mation or more than a supporting role in formation. The school gets the child six years too late. It is too large. What teacher can be expected to know her 30-50 children in a year as well as a mother or father? Again, children do not grow mentally and emotionally, to say nothing of morally and religiously, according to their chronological age—the norm for most school groupings. Further, in Catholic philosophy the school receives its mandate to teach from the parents. Too prevalent is the concept that the school is a function of the state, despite the 1944 Supreme Court statement: "It is cardinal with us that the custody, care and nurture of the child reside first in the parents whose primary function and freedom include preparation for obligations the State can neither supply nor hinder."

But cannot our educators take some of this burden? To this writer it seems obvious that no priest, nun, doctor or school nurse has time even to begin an adequate sex education. One could hardly imagine any single person taking this over in the school of which the author has charge—there are 1600 boys and girls in it! Of course, the school, priest, nun, nurse, psychiatrist do have a tremendous power of *helping* and *supporting* parents, as Pius XII indicates,[3] but they *cannot* substitute for them. If only the effort to take away parental function were given over to training them to perform their duty! Everywhere, one finds parents anxious to discharge their duty, if only they knew where to turn for help.

Practically, therefore, parents must take over the job of chastity education if it is to be done at all well. Philosophically it is their duty by the natural law. The prime purpose of marriage is the procreation-and-education-of-children; not purpos*es* but *purpose*. Marriage was intended to perpetuate the human race—not with undeveloped children, but with fully developed adults. Education is merely an extension of procreation. In his Encyclical on Christian Marriage, Pius XI wrote: "There can be no doubt that by natural and divine law, the right and duty of educating offspring belongs primarily to those who, having *begun* the work of nature by begetting children, are *absolutely for-*

[3] Allocution of Pope Pius XII to Women of Catholic Action, Nov. 26, 1941 (*AAS*, XXXIII, [1941], 450-58); published as pamphlet *Guiding Christ's Little Ones* (Washington, D. C.: NCWC, 1942), p. 12.

bidden to leave unfinished the work they have begun and so expose it to inevitable ruin." The school, you say, has already taken over much of this work. Has it? A recent study shows that adolescents get advantage from educational recreational and counseling services only in proportion to good home environments.[4] Pope Pius XII says to parents: "However eminent school teachers may be in their profession, they will have little success in the formation of your children without your collaboration."[5]

Some parents may admit their obligation in general but are not so certain of sex education. Pope Pius XII leaves them no choice when he talks to mothers:

> . . . with the discretion of a mother and a teacher, and thanks to the open-hearted confidences with which you have been able to inspire your children, you will not fail to watch for and to discern the moment in which certain unspoken questions have occurred to their minds and are troubling their senses. It will then be your duty to your daughters, the father's duty to your sons, carefully and delicately to unveil the truth as far as it appears necessary, to give a prudent, true and Christian answer to those questions, and set their minds at rest. If imparted by the lips of Christian parents, at the proper time, in the proper measure and with the proper precautions, the revelation of the mysterious and marvelous laws of life will be received by them with reverence and gratitude, and will enlighten their minds with far less danger than if they learned them haphazardly. . . .[6]

This clear statement of the Pope has been repeated and amplified by many groups of bishops throughout the world. The bishops of England and Wales, the bishops of Scotland and others have given magnificent statements on this problem. The bishops of the U. S. in their statement of November 19, 1950, definitely pointed out the obligation of parents:

> Fathers and mothers have a natural competence to instruct their children with regard to sex. False modesty should not deter them from doing their duty. . . . Sex is one of God's endowments. It should not be ignored or treated as something bad. If sex instruction is

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[4] Powers, Edwin, Witmer, Helen, *An Experiment in Preventing Juvenile Delinquency* (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1951).

[5] Pope Pius XII, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

properly carried on in the home, a deep reverence will be developed in the child and he will be spared the shameful inferences which he often makes when he is left to himself to find out about sex.

Pius XII insists: "It is not enough to be conscious of an obligation, and to have the desire to discharge it; it is necessary also to render oneself capable of discharging it competently."[7]

Are priests and nuns free of obligation? No. They also have a heavy responsibility. Pius XII repeats the words of Pius XI:

> He [Pius XI] exhorted in the name of Christ all pastors of souls "to use every means, by catechism and instruction, by *word of mouth and in widely published writings,* to ensure that Christian parents are well instructed both in general and in *particular* regarding their duties in the religious, moral and civic education of their children, and regarding the *best methods*—apart from their own example—of attaining that end."[8]

It appears to this writer that many Catholic priests and educators have insisted on the obligation of parents without sufficiently providing the leadership or pointing out the methods. True, in many places there have been lectures by outstanding authorities. True also, there is adequate Catholic literature on the market. But perhaps not enough effort has been used to get this information into the hands of the majority of parents. In an attempt to safeguard the child and teen-ager from harmful literature, have the parents themselves been "protected" from the information? For instance, there is a small annotated bibliography at the end of this article. Many of the books and pamphlets have been in print for years. Yet, how many parents know of them, and when they have learned of their existence where can they get such works? They *could* write to the publishers but human inertia rarely gets as far as letter paper. Catholic bookstores, schools, Parent-Teacher groups, Mothers' Clubs, and yes, even rectories could well feel duty-bound to provide adequate literature and guidance. Many dioceses are doing a great deal in the right direction, but much remains to be done.

Some priests and educators who have been proceeding in the right direction may have been somewhat disconcerted at the

[7] Pope Pius XII, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 1 and 2.

press release of a recent statement of Pope Pius XII on September 24, 1951. There is no doubt that His Holiness is very strong in condemning certain books on sex education, which "come from Catholic sources and seek to influence Catholics." His Holiness does not name the publications to which he refers, but he leaves no doubt as to the type of publication he condemns. He attacks books which "exaggerate beyond all measure the importance and scope of the sexual element of life"; which give to sexual life "the meaning and value of an end in itself," making the reader "lose sight of the true original end of marriage, which is the procreation and education of children, and of the grave duty of married persons toward this end which the writings about which we speak leave too much in the shade."

Second, the Pope points out that the literature he is criticizing "seems to take no account of the experience of yesterday, today and always, an experience founded on nature which proves that, in moral training, neither instruction nor initiation offers any advantage of itself. On the contrary, it is seriously unhealthy and prejudicial unless closely bound to constant discipline, vigorous mastery of oneself, and, above all, to the use of supernatural forces—prayer and the Sacraments. . . . Of these supernatural forces scarcely a word is whispered in the literature of which we speak: they are usually passed over in silence."

It is most difficult to make a judgment of our Catholic literature in the United States in the light of these words of the Pope. A few works—especially some shorter pamphlets—might fall to some degree under the ban of Pius XII. However, in this author's opinion, certainly none of those listed in the appended bibliography fall under this ban.

Certainly, also, this strong recent statement of the Pope does not condemn all Christian chastity education, for His Holiness refers back to his own earlier outlines, quoted above in this article, when he says: "With all the seriousness, attention and dignity the subject requires, the Church has dealt with the question of instruction in this matter to the extent counseled or demanded by the normal physical and psychological development of the adolescent and by individual cases arising from varying special circumstances."

This recent statement of the Pope should make us doubly sure

that we are not falling into naturalistic solutions but are thoroughly integrating sex, or better, chastity education, into a truly Christian philosophy of life.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that parents, Catholic priests, and the Hierarchy have a factor in their spiritual calling in life which fits them especially for their duties of education and leadership, respectively. This factor, a transforming one, is the grace of their respective states. If this grace is effectively stirred up by prayer and the sacraments, and if study and action arise from this supernatural spur, then soon, articles of this kind will be unnecessary.

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SHALL WE SCRAP THE PURELY PENAL LAW?

Periodically the Catholic press will carry an article that aims a broadside at the notion of the purely penal law. It is easy to understand a speculative interest in the problem of the purely penal law, but the emotional overtones running through many of these publications leave the impression that it is a practical rather than a speculative problem that is engaging the attention of the author. Many of them seem to be inspired chiefly by a zeal for law observance. While one can readily appreciate this zeal, it is not so easy to appreciate the practical wisdom behind these attacks. It is not the purpose of this article to re-examine the validity of the concept of purely penal laws or to inquire into the *de facto* question of their existence. The reader may gather that the writer is inclined to accept both. We intend merely to examine some of the practical aspects of the problem often overlooked by those who attack purely penal law. Is penal law sterile? Does it invite lawlessness? Would conscience obligations be more effective? Has the notion of purely penal law been properly presented?

Those who oppose penal law for practical reasons seem to work from the assumption that obligations in conscience give a far greater guarantee of law observance. One wonders if this is always true. When one considers the ease with which conscience obligations are violated today, there is good reason to wonder whether they are more effective than obligations at law. If, for instance, one considers the prevalence of birth control or divorce,[1] or better perhaps, of graft (both in politics and in business), lying, petty thieving (of the respectable kind, i.e. from hotels, restaurants, places of employment, etc.), uncharitable conversation centered around the faults of others, it is difficult to make any strong claims for the effectiveness especially of slight obligations.

[1] Some might explain the frequency of birth control and divorce by the fact that many do not admit the moral evil of these actions. So they would object that the comparison is not fair. But even if one were to concede this point, there would still be no reason to expect any great improvement from substituting moral laws for purely penal laws. Those who would not admit the evil of divorce or birth control would hardly be more willing to admit a moral obligation in the less important matters that are ordinarily considered penal.

Have any purely penal laws fared much worse than these natural law precepts? A comparison of purely penal obligations with obligations in conscience might well show that in this day and age the former are at least as effective. It is hard to see, then, how any great upsurge in civic observance would result from scrapping the purely penal law.

One may readily admit that a purely penal law can at times be as ineffective as the bark of a toothless dog. But where this occurs it will usually reflect a disregard for moral as well as for purely penal law. The effectiveness of purely penal law depends in the last resort on the conscientious fulfillment of moral obligations on the part of the forces of law. It is because those entrusted with the duty of imposing penalties are not living up to their conscience obligations that penal laws are not effective. So, if there is a widespread disregard for penal laws in a community, it will be traceable to a large extent to a lax moral conscience on the part of the forces of law. Unless one could assume that the general conscience of the community was more delicate than the official conscience, it would be foolish to expect that law observance would be much improved by substituting moral laws for penal laws. Ordinarily such an assumption cannot be made. The government, especially in a democratic country, is usually not much better or much worse than the people. It is not likely, then, that the people would take moral obligations more seriously than the government. One would have to admit that in a community where penal laws are ineffective there is little likelihood that moral laws would be any more effective.

If the concept of purely penal law has such disastrous effects on law observance as many of these authors maintain, it is difficult to understand how religious institutes with such laws have survived these many centuries. It is even more difficult to understand how for the last five or six centuries religious founders have shown an almost unanimous preference for the purely penal rule. Must it be said that they were deliberately choosing a lower level of observance? Would serious-minded people accuse them of giving scandal to their followers? Hardly. It may be argued that the comparison is not fair since religious have stronger motives for observance than the ordinary layman. This may be true. But it is also true that the rules he is obliged to observe are

more difficult and enter much more intimately into his daily life, and the greater difficulty of the observance would seem to balance the stronger (or at least more active) motives. Moreover, if one were to make a comparison between those institutes whose rules (at least in part) bind under pain of sin and those whose rules do not so bind, it would probably show that the level of observance does not differ appreciably. This is not meant to be in any sense a reflection on those who take rules which bind under pain of sin. It is all to their credit to do so. The only point intended here is that institutes with purely penal rules are not for that reason less observant. One can hardly deny, then, that a high level of observance is just as compatible with penal law as it is with moral law.

One author writing on this subject seems to be under the impression that religious are not aware of the binding force of their rules.[2] If they accepted the opinion that their rules do not bind in conscience, he feels that obedience would not survive. These religious, rather than respect and reverence their rule, would take it lightly and might easily begin to contemn it. In answer it may be said first of all that this ignorance does not seem to be a fact. Religious in general seem quite aware of, and are quite willing to accept, the fact that their rules do not bind under pain of sin.[3] If they were not, superiors and those responsible for their training who would allow such false consciences to continue could hardly be excused. The survival of such institutes, then, cannot be explained by a false concept of their obligations on the part of religious subjects. Moreover, even if one were to prescind from the facts of past experience, such a pessimistic prediction of the performance of religious under a purely penal regime, be-

[2] Hyacinth Woroniecki, O.P. "Si enim in familiis religiosis communis accepta esset opinio regulas et constitutiones quibus reguntur non obligare in conscientia, necessario inde sequeretur ruina virtutis obedientiae. . . . Nihil tunc posset impedire quominus in animis religiosorum loco intimae reverentiae et affectionis ad constitutiones et regulas oriretur earum parvipensio, a parvipensione vero ad contemptum quam facilis transitus." *Angelicum*, XVIII (1941), 386.

[3] It would be difficult to understand how any other attitude could be common. The constitutions of many religious institutes explicitly state that the rules of themselves do not bind under pain of sin except where and insofar as a rule may be a repetition of a divine or ecclesiastical law which so binds.

sides being quite daring, would certainly not be very flattering to the generosity of religious men and women.

Those who attack purely penal laws frequently sum up the meaning of these laws in such words as: "It's all right, if you can get away with it." A little reflection will show that this is a mere caricature of the purely penal law. Or if it is not, there is certainly no justification for founders of religious institutes who have imposed such laws. No serious lawmaker has ever taken the attitude that it is all just a game or a contest between the forces of law and its subjects. Nor does the avoidance of a penalty make the violation of a law palatable to the lawmaker. Not even the payment of the penalty would have this soothing effect. To give the impression that the chief interest of the lawgiver is in the skill of the offender, or even in the penalty, is to pervert the whole nature of the law. Even if a ruler were to give a mere counsel to his subjects he would want it observed. Can one deny to a law what is true even of a counsel?

A superior may present his will to his subject in various ways. At times he may feel that a moral law will be his most effective medium. At other times he may judge that a mere counsel will best serve his purpose. Still at other times he may choose a middle course, the purely penal law, as the best instrument in the circumstances for achieving his goal. But whatever medium he chooses, this much is true: his chief interest is in the fulfillment of his will, that is, the promotion of the common good. One may have personal misgivings about the effectiveness of the purely penal law in achieving this goal, but it is unfair to caricature the nature of the law and make the caricature the basis of an attack. The statement made above is a good expression of the penal attitude, which certainly deserves attack, but it by no means does justice to the penal law. The penal attitude is an attitude of indifference to the law itself. It makes the penalty the sole consideration in observing or violating a law. It is, in short, the attitude of the lawless citizen. To identify such an attitude with the nature of a law is a serious mistake.[4]

[4] Some might wish to blame the penal attitude on the penal law doctrine. This would be very difficult to prove. The penal attitude is the result of a lax conscience and is no respecter of laws. Even if such an attitude were found in a delicate conscience, its origin could not be traced to the nature of penal law but merely to a misconception of it resulting from a faulty education. It is the educator who is at fault, not the nature of the law.

But let us suppose that the purely penal law would no longer be tenable. All positive laws then would bind in conscience. If a ruler did not wish to bind his people in conscience his only alternative would be the counsel. There would be no middle course. Laws regulating speed limits, parking, traffic, jaywalking, etc., would then certainly bind in conscience. Immediately one would be faced with the alternative of accepting a large scale multiplication of at least material sins or of allowing wholesale exceptions to the law. Proponents of the theory of conscience obligations are sufficiently realistic to recognize this fact, and since their purpose is not merely to multiply sin, they choose the other alternative. And, in fact, justice demands this choice. Civil laws are human laws. As such, they are not endowed with the absolute binding force of the negative precepts of the natural law. Allowance must be made for exceptions, and in the realm of those laws which are ordinarily considered purely penal the exceptions will admittedly be frequent. The question then arises: How will these exceptions be provided for and at the same time controlled?

Proponents of conscience laws understand that it would be impossible, as well as impractical, to formulate a law that would provide for all exceptions, so they must resort to other expedients. But here they are faced with an initial difficulty. Ecclesiastical law makes ample provision for exceptions by allowing excusing causes, granting dispensations, bestowing actual permissions and allowing presumed permissions. The recent relaxations of the Eucharistic Fast are a good example of how the Church makes allowance for the needs of the faithful. She also gives her ministers the power to dispense, e.g. from fast and abstinence, Sunday observance, publication of matrimonial banns, etc., where need arises. But the civil law is very deficient in this regard.[5] For instance, the civil law is wholly unfamiliar with the notion of dispensation.

Faced with this difficulty, one author allows for a frequent use of *epikeia*.[6] He admits that the determination of the obligation must be left up to the conscience of the individual. This

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[5] This neglect would indicate to those who maintain the *de facto* existence of purely penal laws that the legislators were not concerned with morality.

[6] Ulpiano Lopez, S.J., *Theoria legis pure poenalis*, *Periodica*, XXVII (1938), 215. Cf. also XXIX (1940), 30 ff.

solution presents several difficulties. First of all, the characteristic note of *epikeia* is that it be rare, whereas in these cases its use would admittedly be frequent. Moreover, to put *epikeia* into the hands of everyone with the understanding that it be used generously would lead to all kinds of abuse.

In the first place, the ordinary civilian would not be in a position to judge an excusing cause. Such a judgment would demand a knowledge of the common good. While the ordinary citizen is able to judge his own needs, he simply does not have the necessary information to judge the demands of the common good. This ignorance together with a certain bias in favor of self would reduce judgments of guilt (or obligation) to a minimum. Add to this the fact that in many cases, since the obligation would be slight, the excusing cause would not have to be very weighty. Ultimately, one might be forced to fall back on the imposition of the penalty as a criterion of guilt. Since only the forces of law would be in a position to judge the demands of the common good, a private citizen would have an indication that the common good was at stake only when the forces protecting it would take action. Yet even the imposition of a penalty would not necessarily be a certain criterion. The forces of law in a particluar community might be lax or they might be intolerant of excusing causes. In either case the moral fault would not coincide with the imposition of the penalty. It seems clear, then, that even if all laws did bind in conscience, it would often be very difficult to determine in practice the presence of a moral fault. And unless one were certain of the moral fault, one could not impose the obligation.

Another author attempts a solution of the problem by a theory of self-dispensation.[7] The power of self-dispensation should be given to everyone to be used whenever it would be necessary or useful even for a private good. The concept of self-dispensation is certainly a valid one. But aside from the fact that no such faculty prevails in modern civil codes, a law that would give to everyone the power to dispense himself would certainly be a

[7] Hyacinth Woroniecki, O.P. He defines the purely penal law as follows: "Lex penalis est lex quae, etsi obligat in conscientia ad certos minoris momenti actus, habet tamen sibi adnexam pro omni subdito facultatem seipsum dispensandi absque recursu ad superiorem, quandocumque hoc iudicaverit necessarium sive utile . . ." (*op. cit.*, p. 381).

juridical novelty. Moreover, it would be open to the same abuses to which *epikeia* is open.

The power to dispense might conceivably be granted to members of the police force or other officials, but the opponents of purely penal law would undoubtedly find this very objectionable. Generally speaking, they are as diffident in regard to the conscience of members of the police forces as they are confident of the conscience of the community. And one may readily admit that such a power could easily be abused. Moreover, such an expedient would not cover the many cases where recourse to such an official would be a practical impossibility, or at least, a sheer waste of time. This is undoubtedly the reason why the author mentioned above saw the need for granting the power of self-dispensation to everyone. It seems clear, then, that any theory of dispensation that would be at all reasonable would of itself be quite inadequate to solve the problem of providing for all legitimate exceptions to the law.

Nor would a theory of permissions, actual or presumed, be free from difficulties. The situation would be such in regard to many laws that presumed permissions would necessarily run far ahead of actual permissions. When this occurs, the whole concept of permission becomes distorted and the possibility of control is lost.

In the face of all these difficulties one can hardly expect that the substitution of conscience obligations for penal obligations would make any appreciable difference in present day lawlessness. Given the doubt that would be a frequent occurrence in such an event, lax consciences would remain lax, delicate consciences would be confused and forced to resort to reflex principles to solve their doubts, scrupulous consciences would be tortured to death.

Moreover, those who would outlaw purely penal law, rather than facilitate law enforcement, would actually make it more difficult. Under the penal system the offender recognizes that the initiative and the decision are up to the forces of law. Once he is caught, he realizes that he is at their mercy. But a system that would make the judgment of the offender the norm for determining the obligation would put the forces of law at a distinct disadvantage. One can imagine the haggling that would

go on between the forces of law and an offender who judged (rightly or wrongly) that he had an excusing cause, or perhaps more often, would feign an excusing cause to escape the penalty.

The author of the self-dispensation theory recognized this difficulty. To solve it, in his definition of penal law, which according to him is a law that binds in conscience but from which everyone may dispense himself, he lays down this condition: if apprehended, one must be willing to pay the penalty without recourse or appeal even in cases where he has reasonably dispensed himself.[8] Obviously, it will be very difficult to explain to a man to whom a superior has given the power to dispense himself why he should accept a penalty when he has made a reasonable use of that power. Enforcement of penalties will be much easier where the offender understands that the judgment of fault is not up to himself but wholly up to the forces of law.[9]

There may be good reason, therefore, for trying to salvage the purely penal law. That being the case, it might be well to examine whether the fault is in the nature of the law or in the way in which it has been presented. Such an examination may well show that justice has not been done to the purely penal law in presentation. Certainly, anyone who would present the purely penal law as something one could violate any time he could get away with it would render the law sterile just by his presentation. In this respect those who oppose purely penal law are at least as much at fault as those who favor it. Penal laws should be presented to the public in much the same way as the rule is presented to religious. One can hardly imagine a spiritual director telling religious in a conference that it is perfectly all right to break a rule if they can get away with it. He will rather present the rule as God's will in their regard, as their way to perfection. He will show the intrinsic value of the rule as a means of pro-

[8] "... hac tamen condicione, ut deprehensus sine ullo quoque recursu vel appellatione poenam a lege statutam, etiam in his in quibus omnino rationabiliter se dispensaverit, subire non renuat (*ibid.*).

[9] This is not to deny the validity of the concept of a dispensation restricted to the internal forum. In ecclesiastical law faculties *for the internal forum only* are frequently given to priests. But the Church does not exercise coactive power in the external forum with near the frequency the State exercises it. The occasion for conflict between the two forums, then, will be rare in ecclesiastical law.

moting their own good and that of the community. It may be only rarely that he will refer to the penalty attached to the violation of the rule, and then it will be to stimulate observance, not to destroy it. Nor is this just a pious approach divorced from the reality of facts. It is based on a true concept of the nature of law. The penalty, after all, is meant to be a support to the rule; it is not the reason for the rule. To present the rule as though the avoidance of the penalty were the chief reason for observing it would be contrary to the whole concept of the rule. While it is never wise to overlook the value of a healthy fear as a motivating force, every spiritual director knows that fear of a penalty is not the only nor even the chief motive for observing the rule. The rule has a value in itself which is independent of the value of avoiding the penalty. It is this value which should get primary consideration.

There is no reason why this same approach should not be taken in presenting civil laws to the public. Like religious rules, civil laws have a value in themselves which is independent of any consideration of the penalty attached to them. To focus on the penalty and present it as the chief consideration in observing or violating a law is to strip the law of all intrinsic value. And in a situation in which, because of laxity on the part of the forces of law, it is easy to escape penalties, such a presentation actually invites lawlessness. The one who presents civil laws to the public should take his cue from the spiritual director. He should stress the intrinsic value of the law, i.e. its relation to the common good, the dignity of the virtue of legal justice, etc. The last, rather than the first, consideration should be given to the penalty. Even in presenting moral law punishment never is and never should be made a primary consideration. There is no more reason why it should be made a primary consideration in presenting penal law. The fact that a law is purely penal does not mean that it has no other reason for its existence.

Too often in presenting purely penal laws teachers allow themselves to be distracted by the purely penal aspect of the law. The result is that the purely penal law comes off worse in presentation than would a mere counsel. In presenting the counsel the teacher would undoubtedly stress the value of the counsel and its intrinsic importance. But in presenting the purely penal law the value of the law itself is overlooked and the stress is put on the

note of pure penality. Moreover, the stress is such that the purely penal aspect, rather than being an aid to observance, actually becomes an obstacle to it.

The mistake in presentation undoubtedly stems from an effort to distinguish the purely penal law from the moral law. The speculative importance which the note of pure penality has as a distinguishing factor is allowed to obscure the notes which penal law has in common with moral law but which are far more important. It must be kept in mind that a note may have speculative importance as a means of distinguishing but may be otherwise unimportant. Thus, for instance, skin pigmentation assumes an importance in distinguishing the negro race from the white race. But the fact that a negro has colored skin is insignificant when compared with the fact that he has a human soul. It would be a serious mistake so to exaggerate the importance of skin pigmentation that it would obscure the human soul which the negro has in common with the white man. It is just as much a mistake so to be distracted by the note of pure penality in a law that one would overlook its intrinsic value. One could not even argue with certainty that the purely penal law has less value than a moral law. The purely penal aspect may be the result of a prudential consideration whereby the legislator judged that such a law would be the most effective instrument in the circumstances. In a community where the public conscience is hardened a temporal punishment might easily be more effective than the fear of punishment in the next life.

So, before a suggestion to scrap the purely penal law can be taken seriously it might be well to be sure, first of all, that the fault is in the nature of the law rather than in the presentation. If the fault is in the presentation, conservative treatment would demand that the remedy be applied there first. One can cure a toothache by extracting the tooth, but a filling might serve the same purpose. But if on further analysis it is found that the purely penal law is defective, it might still be wise to inquire whether a law that would bind in conscience but would necessarily carry with it a whole carload of exceptions would be any more effective.

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THE SOCIOLOGIST'S "EXPERIMENTING IN NEGATIONS"

With the passing of the years, Justice Holmes became increasingly distressed by the growing "skepticism of patriotic values" he found among his "annuals," his honor-graduate law secretaries (one of whom was Alger Hiss). Holmes had no sympathy with "experimenting in negations."[1] How much educational denudation proceeds in the individual student we are shown in a report from the Psychoeducational Clinic of Harvard University:

> The first reaction is one of disillusionment, with its self-depreciation at the thought of being so gullible in the past, accompanied by an intense dislike for those people and institutions that had led him along blindfolded for twenty years. . . . As a student said to the writer last week—a student who in three semesters at college has yet to receive a grade below A—"If there was one thing that I could feel to be *true*, I should cling to it forever and be happy. There seems to be nothing that the scientists have left us."

Sociology, the Clinic adds, creates for its students "unlimited problems of varying intensity."[2]

Courses in marriage and the family have long been a fertile field for this "experimenting in negations," emphasizing the "man-madeness" of the family institution and discrediting its religious foundation. Among the authors who have published accounts in this field of the "harmful" influence of Christianity—more particularly early Christianity—are three who have been honored as presidents of the American Sociological Society. Their unique position is our reason for giving them here our exclusive attention. Of the first two of these men, Drs. George Howard and E. B. Reuter, I shall have less to say since they are both dead—one of them long since—and their damaging publications while still cited give little promise of a reprinting. Moreover, a recent vol-

[1] Max Lerner, *The Mind and Faith of Justice Holmes* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1945), p. XLII.

[2] F. E. Williams, ed., "Some Social Aspects of Mental Hygiene," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, May, 1930, pp. 117, 119.

ume of the third of these gentlemen, Dr. Stuart A. Queen,[3] is sufficiently representative of the anti-Christian spirit to supply much more than sufficient material for our discussion.

Of Drs. Howard and Reuter I shall content myself with pointing out in passing what seems an obvious over-readiness to indict early Christianity in the field of sex. Both Howard and Reuter, for example, give us as completely factual an alleged debate of the bishops of the Council of Maçon, A.D. 585, as to whether women have souls. Howard tells us that as the outcome of the debate, "Christian women were . . . allowed to remain human beings in the eyes of the clergy even though considered very weak and bad ones."[4] Howard's indicated source of that charge is not the record of the Council of Maçon or even a trustworthy history of the Council, either of which he could surely have easily found in his great University of Chicago library. Instead he cites only one Matilda Gage *(Woman, Church and State)*. Of her we are told in the *Dictionary of American Biography* that she had completed her formal education and married at the age of eighteen. As to her historical competence, her sisterly biographer says, "She always had a knack of rummaging through old libraries, bringing more startling facts to light than any woman I ever knew." Dr. Reuter adds a further note to the alleged conciliar debate, that fifty-nine bishops participated and voted women to be human beings by a majority of one.[5] Matilda Gage is again the historic source.

Had the distinguished retailers of this weird story consulted a record of the Council they would have found no debate at all and no vote, but a mere discussion of semantics, the meaning of a Latin word, *homo*.[6] But even some sense of history might have been expected to make such tale-bearing impossible. Bishops of a faith that had from its beginning held open to women its fonts of grace; that had always treated also its female martyrs as already in eternal beatitude; that had long since solemnly proclaimed the

[3] *The Family in Various Cultures*, John B. Adams, co-author (New York: Lippincott, 1952).

[4] George Elliott Howard, *History of Matrimonial Institutions*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1904), I, 331 note.

[5] Edward B. Reuter and Jessie R. Runner, *The Family* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1931), p. 107.

[6] Mansi, *Amplissima Coll. Concil.* (Paris and Leipzig, 1901), IX, 959 note.

divine motherhood of the Blessed Virgin—surely such bishops were not solemnly debating in the late sixth century as to whether their own mothers and sisters were mere anthropoids.

Dr. Reuter in a personal letter disclaimed responsibility for the many discrediting things he gives us of the early Christian influence. His book on *The Family* he reminds us is of readings, "a collection of articles exemplifying various points of view towards the family institution." But both of the articles he reprints regarding the early Christian influence are from writers antecedently hostile. One of them, the determinist William Graham Sumner, has said of his unbelief, "I have never discarded beliefs deliberately. I left them in the drawer, and after a while, when I opened it there was nothing there at all."[7] The other critic cited by Reuter is one Theodore Schroeder. Reuter had declared in the preface that his volume "is designed as an introduction to the serious study of family life" and contains "a considerable percentage of the significant work that has been done." Hence one would suppose that Schroeder was a recognized authority on his subject. Instead, investigation shows him a Socialist trained in law and civil engineering; his pertinent qualification was a "hobby of sex psychology." The sources of the indictments of Christianity Reuter omits from the reprint, because—as he tells us—"the original printings are available for the occasional student who will wish to trace the source of the statements." That "occasional student" would be surprised at his findings. Schroeder's omitted documentation is of the Renan *The Apostles*, Kraft-Ebbing *Psychopathia Sexualis*, Bebel *Woman Under Socialism*, Edgar *Variations of Popery*, Matilda Gage *Women, Church and State* variety. Surely Christianity, and students interested in learning its influence upon marriage and the family, deserve better treatment.

We come now to the recently published volume by Dr. Queen, the third of these former presidents of the American Sociological Society. To this volume we shall give more extended attention. A few favorable remarks are there made regarding the early Christian influence, but only enough to give the many grave charges an appearance of objectivity. We cannot even begin to discuss them

[7] A. G. Keller, *Reminiscences of William Graham Sumner* (Yale University Press, 1933), p. 103.

all but we shall not omit the most serious. Let us take first a sort of compendious indictment. Dr. Queen says:

> From what has gone before it is plain to see that the early Church viewed sex as vile. It condemned not only fornication, adultery, pederasty, masturbation, and bestiality, but also contraception, abortion, the reading of "lascivious" books, singing "wanton" songs, dancing "suggestive" dances, bathing in mixed company, wearing "improper" clothing, and attending the theater. A sterner code would be hard to envisage (p. 156).

I must confess that I stand somewhat aghast at most of the details of that indictment. Surely even the most blase "man about town" would find much to disapprove of in the items mentioned. Our police courts are even today sentencing those convicted of most of these offenses to jail, even to the penitentiary. But Dr. Queen gives no suggestion that any of these actions condemned by the early Church lie outside the protection of a "bill of rights."

For our present purpose, it seems reasonable to suppose that a condemnation of "fornication, adultery, pederasty, masturbation, and bestiality" will go unchallenged by most readers. If not, they are in danger of the "vice squad." Abortion, too, can still put one securely behind the bars for a term of years. "Lascivious" books—sent through the mails or across state lines—may start the sender on his way to a federal prison. As for the other items in the condemned list, do not even respectable *pagans* recognize there are such things as "objectionable" songs, obscene dances, indecent exposure? And as to "bathing in mixed company," is its disapproval so inexplicable since the bathing was in the nude?[8]

As to early Christian disapproval of the theater, the matter seems less mysterious when such an authority as Ludwig Friedlander tells us

> . . . the stage could only draw its audience with ignoble means, rough jokes and sensual by-play (vol. II, p. 90). There were scenes of adultery . . . or scenes of sodomy frequently enacted (p. 93). Pantomines were generally accused of immorality and evil influence, and their most zealous protagonists could not rebut the implication (p. 106). Civil *infamia* was still the lot of all who performed in public for the

[8] *Apostolic Constitutions*, Bk. 1, Sec. III.

amusement of the people, as it was of a soldier dismissed in disgrace, the pander, the convicted thief, the swindler or caluminator (p. 111).[9]

As Ferdinand Lot adds:

> Even in the theatre the public was not satisfied if in the representation fiction was not replaced by sanguinary reality. It only tolerated the tragedy of *Hercules on Mount Oeta* if at the end the hero is really burnt. The mime Laureolus is crucified, not in play, but in reality. The sanguinary games were succeeded by obscene pantomimes.[10]

Obviously what early Christianity objected to in the theater was not a Disney fantasy.

This leaves us little of Dr. Queen's compendious indictment. We pass over his reference to contraception, as being a matter at present in dispute in some quarters; but even its proponents would for the most part confine its use to the married. And even this use finds hostile critics quite outside the ranks of Christian conservatives. Mahatma Gandhi, for one, in this matter sounded like another Jerome. We will, however, discuss at some length the only remaining item in the summary indictment, the charge that "it is plain to see that the early Church viewed sex as vile," a charge Dr. Queen several times repeats and in which he is not alone.

Critics of the sex teachings of the early Church are fond of proving their point through citations from two writers, Tertullian and Jerome. The fact that Tertullian was himself a declared heretic by the time he held the cited objectionable views is passed over in absolute silence. The fact is that the rebellious Tertullian taunted the orthodox churchmen as "sensualists" for their moderate views.[11] But to the consternation of the present day critic, even Tertullian before his break with the Church spoke in high appreciation of marriage, the institutionalized sex-relationship:

[9] *Roman Life and Manners Under the Early Empire,* 4 vols., 2nd ed. (London: George Routledge and Sons Ltd., 1928).

[10] *End of the Ancient World and Beginning of the Middle Ages* (New York: Knopf, 1931).

[11] William P. LeSaint, S.J., ed., *Early Christian Writers: Tertullian Treatises on Marriage and Remarriage* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1951), pp. 70, 151.

How shall we ever be able adequately to describe the happiness of that marriage which the Church arranges, the Sacrifice strengthens, upon which the blessing sets a seal, at which angels are present as witnesses, and to which the Father gives His consent? . . .

How beautiful, then, the marriage of two Christians, two who are one in hope, one in desire, one in the way of life as they follow, one in the religion they practice. They are as brother and sister, both servants of the same Master. Nothing divides them, either in flesh or in spirit. They are, in very truth, two in one flesh; and where there is but one flesh there is also but one spirit . . . (*Ad uxorem*, II, 9).

Jerome, on the other hand, is more rough-spoken. He exaggerates for emphasis or in the heat of debate, in the matter of sex as in everything else. But he is in his convictions incurably orthodox, and when chided for his exaggerations points to the whole tenor of his teachings as explanatory of his meaning.

Modern critics charging early Christianity as having taught "all sex is vile" must in fairness interpret and qualify an occasional exaggerated expression, having regard not only to the times and place but most especially to the total religious creed out of which the exaggeration springs. Thus, the spokesmen for early Christianity must be interpreted in terms of the plain words of the Scriptures which they studied so diligently and cited so abundantly. (The North African congregation of Jerome's time that abandoned its bishop because he had introduced a new scriptural reading showing Jonas sheltered by an ivy rather than the proverbial "cucumber-vine"[12] should suggest some measure of the loyalty of the Church Fathers themselves to their Book.) This is most true of the criticized Jerome, the outstanding Scripture scholar of all Christian history. Jerome justly protests the scandal taken at some of his expressions, citing in his own defense his devotion to the scriptures:

Can anyone be said to condemn marriage who insists that it is a precept of the Lord that wives should not be put away, and that what God has joined let no man put asunder? (*Epistola* 48, 5.) It is only heretics who condemn marriage and despite the command of God; but we listen happily to every word the Lord says in praise of marriage

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[12] F. X. Murphy, C.SS.R., ed., *A Monument to St. Jerome* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1952), p. 79.

(*Adv. Jov.* II, 40). I protest with my last breath that I neither condemn nor have I condemned marriage (*Ep.* 48, 20).

One of the most cited of Gospel texts among the early Church Fathers is the story of the marriage feast at Cana. Christ's presence and participation there are explained as meaning—St. Augustine says typically—"that He might confirm the chastity of married life and might show the sacred symbol of marriage" (*In Joan.*, tr. 9, n. 2). Other scriptural passages treasured by these early Church Fathers described the marriage union—in the words of St. Paul—as a symbol of the union of Christ and His Church. Hence, "Husbands love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for her sake. . . . Even thus ought husbands to love their wives as their own bodies. . . . For this shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall come to be one flesh. This is a great sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the Church" (*Eph.* 5:25, 28, 31). The marriage union, the early Fathers remind us, was meant to be for life: "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder" (*Mark* 10:9). Far from being "vile," marital relations themselves were "the debt" that the spouses owed each other, of which neither should be defrauded (*I Cor.* 7:3). But enough. The scriptural approval of the sex relationship of marriage is too obvious to require proof. The point I would repeat here is that the early Church Fathers were "men of one book," the Scriptures. The assumption that they rejected the obvious scriptural approbation of the marriage relationship on the score that "all sex is vile" is fantastic.

Dr. Queen's comprehensive description of the attitude of the early Fathers towards marriage is very damaging but only because it is out of focus. He tells us, for example, that the Church Fathers praised "those who avoided matrimony. Bachelors and maids occupied higher positions than husbands and wives" (p. 152). The bare fact of celibacy was never praised by the Fathers; celibacy itself was condemned unless maintained without sexual fault; one was urged to wed. Celibacy was honored only when maintained for religious reasons, according to the mind of St. Paul: "And the unmarried woman and virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband. . . . Therefore both he that giveth his virgin

in marriage doth well; and he that giveth her not, doth better" (*I Cor.* 7:34, 38).

Far from a blind preference of celibacy over matrimony, the early church obliged even the clergy to prove their motives in remaining unwed. The very early *Apostolic Constitutions* provided that "if any bishop, or presbyter, or deacon, or indeed any of the sacerdotal catalogue, abstains from marriage, flesh, or wine, not for his own exercise, but because he abominates these things, forgetting that 'all things were very good,' and that 'God made man male and female,' and blasphemously abuses the creature, either let him reform, or let him be deprived, and be cast out of the Church" (VIII, 51). "Let not a bishop, priest, or a deacon cast off his own wife under pretense of piety; but if he does cast her off, let him be suspended. If he go on in it, let him be deprived" (VIII, 6). All this frankly because, the *Apostolic Constitutions* declare, "We believe that lawful marriage, and the begetting of children, is honorable and undefiled" (VI, Sec. XI).

One final point we will discuss of the Queen indictment: the early Church, he tells us, sought to "put women back in their place" (p. 19), that place being one of inferiority (p. 157). The charge of course is an old one; the evidence pointed to is the "emancipated" condition of the Roman woman of the later Empire, an emancipation not known again—we are told—until modern times. However, the picture that competent historians of the period give us would seem to show rather license than liberty. But the matter is too well known to require more than a single citation; the following then from Samuel Dill:

> . . . even Ovid is half inclined to be shocked at the scenes on the stage which were witnessed by women and young boys. The foulest tales of the old mythology . . . were enacted to the life, or told with a nakedness of language, compared with which even Martial might seem chaste. Not less degrading were the gladiatorial shows, so lavishly provided by Augustus and Trajan, as well as by Caligula and Domitian, at which the Vestals had a place of honour. It is little wonder that women accustomed to take pleasure in the sufferings and death of brave men should be capable of condemning their poor slave women to torture or the lash for a sullen look, or a half-heard murmur. The grossness with which Juvenal describes the effect of the stage on the morals of women savours of the Suburra. But of the poisonous character of these performances there can be no doubt. . . . While a

Musonious or a Seneca was demanding equal chastity in man and woman, the new woman of Juvenal claims a vicious freedom equal to her husband's.[13]

The essential contempt of pre-Christian Rome for womanhood can be seen even from its treatment of its most honored, the Vestal Virgins. Introduced into their calling between the years six and ten, too young to choose for themselves, they were given burdensome vows but little aid to their fulfillment. The Vestals were held liable to a beating by the Pontifex Maxims for a mere failure to maintain the lights before the altar of Vesta. For a proved violation of their vow of virginity the penalty was burial alive.[14]

Panegyrists of the freedom of the Roman woman of the later Empire litle heed the fact that the "emancipated" woman they know of was only the wealthy society woman. Even she had little voice in so vital a matter as her own marriage. Marriage was a political and family affair, the bride was little consulted. If she had great freedom in the matter of divorcing, she was herself equally exposed to being divorced. But why this emphasis upon the "freedom" of the minute fraction of Roman womanhood represented by the society lady? The great majority of Roman women were low-born, poverty stricken, in a society where the mass of the working class were chattel slaves. Mere *things*, with no rights either in law or conscience that the master was held to respect. As we are told in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics:*

Protection to the morality of slaves was strangely slow in developing. . . . Protection to the chastity of female slaves was similarly long delayed, and very imperfect. Not until A.D. 428 was it made penal for *lenones* to employ their slaves in prostitution. Justinian made rape of an *ancilla aliena* a capital offence; but there is no penalty laid down for seduction of an *ancilla* by her own master (XI, 626).

"All the freedoms come and go together," Anne O'Hare McCormick reminds us. No society built on chattel slavery is free at any level of the social scale. Freedom in our western world

[13] *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius* (London: Macmillan, 1925), p. 86 f.

[14] Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), X, 329 f.

is the product of, and continues to depend upon, the conviction that "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you all are one in Christ Jesus" (*Gal.* 3:38). As Walter Lippmann says so well: "The liberties we talk about defending today were established by men who took their conception of man from the great central religious tradition of Western civilization, and the liberties we inherit can almost certainly not survive the abandonment of that tradition."[15]

Dr. Queen having commonly chosen his sources to paint a revolting picture of the influence of the early Church Fathers in the field of sex and marriage, occasionally seems to wish to leave himself a way out. Thus, for example, he remarks, "Now it should be pointed out that the foregoing represents teachings of some Church Fathers. How far the rank and file followed them we do not know. But these teachings have not been without influence even in our own day" (p. 19). I think I have given serious reason to deny the objectivity of the Dr. Queen rendition. Is it justification enough for the grossly disproportionate attention paid the crudities of "some Church Fathers," the fact that these crudities "have not been without influence even in our own day"? What is their historic proportion?

But time and space do not permit a discussion of further charges. Let me close with something more pleasant and constructive, the citation of quite another version of the influence of early Christianity upon marriage and the family. It too comes from a former president of the American Sociological Society, Charles A. Ellwood. How many students using the Dr. Queen text would recognize the Ellwood picture?

> Early Christianity . . . found the family life of the Greco-Roman world demoralized. The reconstruction of the family became, therefore, one of the first tasks of the new religion, and while other circumstances may have aided the church in this work, still on the whole it was mainly the influence of the early church that reconstituted the family life. From the first the church worked to abolish divorce, and fought as evil such vices as concubinage and prostitution, that came to flourish to such an extent in the Pagan world. Only very slowly did the early leaders of the church win the mass of the people to accepting their views as to

[15] New York *Herald Tribune*, Dec. 17, 1938, quoted in *Thought*, March, 1939, p. 11 f.

the permanency of the marriage bond. In order to aid in making this bond more stable the early church recognized marriage as one of the sacraments, and, as implied steadily opposed the idea of the later Roman Law that marriage was simply a private contract. The result was, eventually, that marriage came to be regarded again as a religious bond, and the family life took on once more the aspect of great stability. . . . The church put an end to the exposure of children, which had been common in Rome, and protected childhood in many ways. It also exalted the place of woman in the family, though leaving her subject to her husband. The veneration of the Virgin tended particularly to give women an honored place socially and religiously. . . . On the whole the reconstitution of the family by the church must be regarded as its most striking social work.[16]

Can it be that Drs. Ellwood and Queen are speaking of the same early Christian Church? We wish to pass no judgment on intentions, but Dr. Queen's version is indeed an "experimenting in negations" and should make pleasant reading in the Kremlin. In softening up America for the final blow, such discrediting of the "faith of our fathers" is beyond price. "The first reaction is one of disillusionment, with its self-depreciation at the thought of being so gullible in the past, accompanied by an intense dislike for those people and institutions that had led him along blindfolded for twenty years . . ." "Skepticism of patriotic values?" Why *not?*

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[16] *Sociology and Modern Social Problems* (New York: American Book Co., 1919), pp. 142-44.

THE TITLE "SPIRITUAL VESSEL" IN THE LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or the Litany of Loreto, is one of the most beautiful and one of the most frequently used of all the petitions which the faithful make to Our Lady. Yet the origin of this prayer is quite obscure. It appeared in final printed form only after the middle of the sixteenth century.

The title "Vas spirituale" or "Spiritual Vessel" was included in this formula from the very outset. As a matter of fact it appeared in pre-Loreto litanies of the Blessed Virgin as early as 1524.[1] The form "Vas spiritale" was included in at least one of the mediaeval *Laudes Mariae*, exercises of Marian devotion from which the litanies properly so-called seem to have developed.[2] The Litany of Loreto itself is one form of a pre-existent series of laudatory petitions to Our Lady which seem to have been in popular use throughout the early part of the sixteenth century and quite probably during the last years of the fifteenth.

In the various forms of the Litany which antedate its final edition as the Litany of Loreto there are several titles in which the metaphor "Vas" is applied to Our Lady. Besides the expressions "Vas spirituale," "Vas honorabile," and "Vas insigne devotionis," all of which have survived in the actual Litany of Loreto, there are the titles "Vas coronabile," Vas insigne et devotionis," "Vas redemptionis," "Vas electionis," and "Vas totius sanctitatis."[3]

The term "vas," as used in these litanies, is of scriptural origin. Both the Old and the New Testaments abound in instances where this word is employed metaphorically, to designate some person or even some social group. It indicates persons in Jacob's prophecy about his sons, wherein Simeon and Levi are described as "vessels of iniquity, waging war."[4] The most striking example of this use,

[1] Cf. Angelo De Santi, *Les litanies de la Sainte Vierge: Étude historique et critique*, translated from the Italian by Boudinhon (Paris: Lethielleux, 1900), p. 188, and also the article "Litany of Loreto," by De Santi, in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, IX, 287-92, especially p. 289.

[2] Cf. De Santi, *Les litanies de la Sainte Vierge*, p. 169. De Santi dates the formula as of the eleventh century.

[3] Cf. De Santi, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

[4] Cf. *Gen.* 49: 5.

however, is to be found in the Acts of the Apostles, in the revelation that God gave to Ananias, the Christian leader in the city of Damascus. In that message the Lord declared that Saul, to whom Ananias was being sent, was to be for God Himself "a vessel of election (*σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς*)."[5]

St. Paul himself employed this same metaphor twice, once in the *Epistle to the Romans* and again in the *Second Epistle to Timothy*. In *Romans* this figure is used in St. Paul's assertion of the mystery of God's choice.

> Therefore he hath mercy on whom he will. And whom he will, he hardeneth.
>
> Thou wilt say therefore to me: Why doth he then find fault? For who resisteth his will?
>
> O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it: Why hast thou made me thus?
>
> Or hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?
>
> What if God, willing to shew his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction,
>
> That he might shew the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he hath prepared unto glory?[6]

The passage in the *Second Epistle to Timothy* in which this metaphor appears is one of the classical texts employed by the ecclesiologists of the Catholic Church to show that the true and only kingdom of God in this world contains bad members along with the good.[7]

> But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth: and some indeed unto honor, but some unto dishonor.
>
> If any man therefore shall cleanse himself from these, he shall be

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[5] Cf. *Acts* 9: 15.

[6] *Rom.* 9: 18-23.

[7] Cf. *inter alia*, John Driedo, *De ecclesiasticis scripturis et dogmatibus*, Lib. IV, cap. 2, pars 2; St. Robert Bellarmine, *De ecclesia militante*, cap. 9, ad 5; William Estius, *Commentaria in epistolas apostolicas*, in cap. II Epistolae II ad Timotheum, v. 20; Francis Sylvius, *De praecipius fidei nostrae orthodoxae controversiis cum nostris haereticis*, Lib. III, q. 1, art. 10, ad 7; John Wiggers, *Tractatus de ecclesia*, dub. I, n. 11.

a vessel unto honor, sanctified and profitable to the Lord, prepared unto every good work.[8]

Both "σκεῦος" and "vas" had a much more extensive application than the English words "vase" or "vessel." They applied not only to metal or earthenware containers for liquids, but to almost every kind of equipment or gear. A plow, for instance, is classified among various kinds of *vasa* in the *Digest* of Justinian.[9]

When, however, we turn to the metaphorical application of the term "vas," in the case of St. Paul and in the case of Our Lady, it is obvious that this figure of speech can have a twofold significance. It can indicate ultimate destination on the one hand, and on the other actual content and effectiveness. St. Paul has spoken of some men as *vasa*, "unto honor," and of others as "unto dishonor." Manifestly the title of "Vas honorabile," used in the Litany of Loreto, is to be interpreted along this line. Our Lady is pre-eminently the predestined and beloved of God, created and guarded for an eternity of glory.

The terms "Vas spirituale" and "Vas insigne devotionis" must, on the other hand, be understood along the line of content and effectiveness. Mary is the "Vas insigne devotionis" precisely because she has the virtue of religion and performs the act of devotion far more perfectly than any other creature, and also by reason of the fact that her devotion has been and is the cause, under Christ, of the existence of devotion among His brethren. She is the "Vas spiritualis" especially by reason of the fact that she is pre-eminently the possessor and actually the distributor of the *dona spiritualia*, the gifts of grace which Our Lord has merited for men by His sacrificial death.

The word "spiritual" is used here in the sense in which it is employed by St. Paul in the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*.

But, as it is written: That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard: neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him.

But to us God hath revealed them, by his Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

For what man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of a man

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[8] *II Tim.* 2:20 f.
[9] *Digest*, 33, 7, 8.

that is in him? So the things also that are of God, no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God.

Now, we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit that is of God: that we may know the things that are given us from God.

Which things also we speak: not in the learned words of human wisdom, but in the doctrine of the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

But the sensual man perceiveth not these things that are of the spirit of God. For it is foolishness to him: and he cannot understand, because it is spiritually examined.

But the spiritual man judgeth all things: and he himself is judged of no man.[10]

The spiritual man, the ἄνθρωπος πνευματικός, according to St. Paul, is the one who has received the Holy Ghost in order that he may know God's supernatural revelation. He is the one within whom the Holy Ghost dwells, as the basic principle of the life of faith and, ultimately, as the One who is to be directly understood in the Beatific Vision which is the crowning act of that life of faith.[11]

In praising Our Lady as the "Vas spirituale," then, the Catholic Church wills to call attention to the fact that Mary is the ultimate exemplar of our Catholic life of faith. The God-given spiritual power, by which the adopted children of God may achieve, even in this world, an intellectual possession of the goods of the supernatural order, existed and acted in Our Lady more effectively than in any other being. We must not lose sight of the fact that other virtues, especially that of charity, existed in Our Lord in a more intense and perfect degree than they did even in Mary. Our Lord, however, from the very moment that His human nature began to exist, had that human nature perfected in the performance of the act of the Beatific Vision. Thus Our Lord never had the virtue of faith.

Our Lady possessed this virtue, and she exercised that virtue

[10] *I Cor.* 2:9-15.

[11] It is interesting to note that Estius, in his commentary on this passage (*op. cit.*), holds that men can be in the state of grace without being "spiritual" in the sense that St. Paul uses the term here. Estius was one of the most brilliant and influential exegetes writing at the very time the term "Vas spirituale" was being introduced into the earlier forms of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

more intensely and perfectly than any other being ever has or ever will.[12] Thus the qualification of "spiritual," indicating precisely the perfection and the supernaturalness of the faith, belongs in a special way to Our Lady.

Mary's faith, however, had a definitely and essentially social function. It was precisely through her faith that she was strengthened to utter the *fiat* at the time of the Annunciation. Her cousin St. Elizabeth hailed her precisely as "beata quae credidisti, Blessed art thou that hast believed."[13]

St. Irenaeus of Lyon spoke of our regeneration into Christ as "ex virgine per fidem."[14] He wrote in such a way as to make it clear that the faith of which he spoke was Our Lady's faith, the faith that enlightened her to consent to be the mother of the Incarnate Word. And that faith was animated by divine charity, through the eminent possession and exercise of which again Our Lady can be designated properly as the "Spiritual Vessel." As St. Augustine taught, "by her charity, she co-operated so that the faithful might be born into the Church (cooperata est caritate ut fideles in ecclesia nascerentur)."[15]

Thus, as the high exemplar of the life of faith and of divine grace, and as an agent under Christ in the granting of that divine life to the children of men, the Church salutes its Queen as the "Spiritual Vessel." It combines two expressions or terms which had been employed in the divinely inspired letters of St. Paul to set forth its own consciousness of the perfection and the effectiveness of the supernatural life, the life of divine faith and of the Beatific Vision, in the Mother of Christ's Mystical Body.

The existence of this expression, which at first sight might seem obscure and primarily of technical interest, in a formula as popular as the Litany of Loreto, is one of the indications of the depth of Catholic devotion to the Mother of God. The designation "Vas spirituale" was not made famous by being insisted upon and explained at any great length by one of the great Doctors or Fathers of the Catholic Church. Indeed, as Patristic references to Our

[12] Cf. Fenton, "The Function of Our Lady's Faith in the Catholic Church," in *Marian Studies*, I (1950), 138-47.

[13] *Luke* 1: 45.

[14] *Adversus haereses*, IV, 33, 4, 11.

[15] *De sancta virginitate*, 6, 6.

Lady go, this term is not one of primary importance at all. Even the indefatigable Cardinal Vives, in his *Dictionarium Marianum*, does not list the expression "Vas spirituale," although he mentions many other uses by the Fathers and other ancient ecclesiastical writers of the term "Vas" as applied to the Virgin Mother of God.[16]

The important thing to note is that this term was evolved and used by learned servants of Mary who never achieved literary fame. It was popularized by the plain Catholic people, in the prayers at the shrine of Loreto and during the petitions made to Mary on the occasion of the serious dangers during which these people intensified their prayers to God through her. This term, employing some of the most abstruse Pauline terminology as a title of affection and praise for Our Lady is, in the final analysis, something the people of God have loved.

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[16] The book was published by the Vatican Press in 1901. Cardinal Vives gives nine instances of the use of the term "Vas" as applied to the Blessed Virgin.

Answers to Questions

INTERRUPTION OF HOLY MASS

Question: When one offers Holy Mass at a side altar is it proper for him to hold up his Mass for the consecration of the Mass at an adjoining altar? What would be justifying causes for interrupting the Mass?

Answer: The celebrant should not interrupt his Mass at the time of the consecration of the bread and wine of the Mass at an adjoining altar.

We are permitted to make a temporary interruption of the Mass for the announcements and sermon, for the nuptial blessing, for the conferring of Holy Orders, and to receive the vows of Religious.

PROPER ORDO IN SISTERS' CONVENT

Question: Some years ago, in the convents of the school sisters teaching in our parish schools, we used the ordo of our community for their daily Mass. Later we made a change. We continued to use our own ordo in our chapel and in the parish church, but we used and still use the ordo of the diocese for the sisters' convent.

Now some say that we are incorrect in our use of the ordo of the diocese in the convent chapel because the chapel is just as much part of the parish as the church and is there only because we have a parish school. All agree that if the convent was not a part of the parish but only in the parish and belonged to the sisters, we should use the ordo of the diocese. Kindly solve our problem.

Answer: In the oratories of nuns erected by the proper authorities the ordo of the place or the diocese is to be followed with respect to Holy Mass unless they have their own proper ordo or calendar. This regulation applies even to religious priests who have the spiritual care of these good women. (S.R.C. n. 4248.)

The Sacred Congregation states specifically that in the oratories of those nuns who recite the divine office according to their own ordo, the calendar proper to them must be followed and not that proper to the diocese.

SIGN OF THE CROSS AT THE COMMUNION OF THE CELEBRANT

Question: How large should the sign of the cross be when the priest makes the sign of the cross with the Sacred Host immediately before he consumes the Sacred Species?

Answer: Rubricists direct that this cross will be made "before the upper part of the breast, as he is to sign himself; so that the lines of the cross do not go beyond the limits of the paten." None of the rubricists justify the custom of some priests elevating the Sacred Host to the height of the forehead and even beyond.

CORD ROSARIES

Question: Our community is located in an area that is predominantly non-Catholic. Because of the increased attention that is being directed to the Holy Rosary, we have been desirous of distributing cord rosaries among these good people. However, the question arises whether or not these cord rosaries may be blessed and fully indulgenced for the use of the faithful. The cross is made of plastic, the corpus being absorbed with the cross.

Answer: There is no question about blessing the cross. As regards attaching the rosary indulgences, we refer to the general ruling that a rosary may be blessed and indulgenced only if it is made of some durable material. (Fanfani, *De Rosario, B.V.M.* n. 99.) Father Francis J. Connell, C.SS.R., states that it can be disputed whether or not a rosary of string meets the requirement. We question very much the blessing and indulgence attached to such a rosary. Chaplains during the last war had the faculty to bless and indulgence such rosaries. When that rescript was issued it was extended "to all chaplains of British and Allied Forces for the duration of the war." We are not in a position to know if this rescript is still in force. However, at most, it seems that only chaplains would enjoy the privilege of blessing the string or cord-type rosary.

PRIVILEGES OF A PROTONOTARY APOSTOLIC

Question: Is a monsignor who is a protonotary apostolic permitted to pontificate? If so, what special vestments does he wear? Is he permitted to use the faldstool?

Answer: A protonotary apostolic *ad instar* is the only grade of this monsignorship represented in our country. With the permission of the Ordinary of the diocese, he may celebrate a Pontifical Mass but on days and occasions specified by the Ordinary. He is never allowed to celebrate a Pontifical Requiem Mass.

When he exercises this privilege he does not use the faldstool but the sedilia. He wears stockings (buskins) and sandals of silk, but adorned only with a yellow braid. His gloves are silk and without ornamentation. He wears a miter of white silk without decoration and the red fringe of the fanons. He may also wear a ring and a plain pectoral cross of gold without gems and suspended from a silk cord of red color with tassels of the same material hanging in back.

KISSING THE PONTIFICAL RING

Question: What is the correct etiquette as regards kissing the ring of a Bishop regardless if he is in his own jurisdiction or not? Is there an indulgence attached to kissing the ring of a Bishop?

Answer: Father McCloud gives the following directions: "When kissing the ring of a cardinal everywhere one should genuflect. The same reverence is due to the apostolic delegate within the place of his delegation. The same reverence is due to the archbishop within his province, a bishop within his own diocese, and an abbot within his monastery.

"The reverence shown to an archbishop or a bishop outside their province or diocese, and to an auxiliary bishop is a low bow when kissing the ring."

The faithful can gain an indulgence of 300 days when they reverently kiss the ring of the Holy Father; an indulgence of 100 days when they kiss the ring of a cardinal, and 50 days' indulgence when they kiss the ring of an archbishop or bishop.

A WEDDING AND THE MISSA PRO POPULO

Question: If the pastor foresees that a wedding is to take place on a day when he is to offer the Mass pro populo, may he anticipate this obligation? To be more specific, may the pastor offer on Wednesday the Missa pro populo which normally should be said on the following day?

Answer: The Code of Canon Law and, in many dioceses, the Bishop permit the pastor or those obligated by the Missa pro populo to transfer this duty to some other day. We see no great harm in anticipating this obligation. Normally this Mass should be offered by the one who is obligated and on the specific day. However, situations may easily arise where this is not possible and then we do what we can to fulfill the obligation in the best possible manner.

Father Jone in his *Moral Theology* remarks that "it is only the application of the Mass that obliges under grave sin. The day designated, the parish church where it is to be said, or the person appointed to say it are prescribed under venial sin only. It would be mortally sinful, however, to deviate from these regulations habitually. . . . Those obliged to say the Missa pro populo must do so in person if possible."

RINGING THE SACRISTY BELL AT THE START OF MASS

Question: What authority is there for the bell being rung just as the priest leaves the sacristy to enter the sanctuary for Mass or some service?

Answer: Rubricians in giving directions for the priests or altar boy as they approach the altar remark that the server rings the bell when leaving the sacristy, "where such practice is customary." They do not specifically require this sacristy bell, but certainly do imply its presence and at least directly justify it. Its fundamental purpose is to warn the faithful that services are to begin.

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MEAT ON FRIDAY

Question: If a person has inadvertently ordered meat in a restaurant on Friday, may he eat it if he realizes only after the meal has been served that he is bound to observe abstinence on this day?

Answer: If he has not yet begun to eat the meat, it is possible that he will be allowed to exchange it for some abstinence fare without any extra cost, and if this is permitted he must follow this

procedure. However, if he will not be permitted to exchange the meal, or if he has already begun to eat it, he would ordinarily be allowed to partake of the dish. The reason is that for a person of average means the expense involved would usually constitute an excusing cause; besides, the wasting of a serving of meat is not commendable. Of course, if scandal could be foreseen from the eating of the meat (as might be the case when the patron is a priest), one should abstain, despite the cost and the waste. It should be noted that this solution refers only to the case of meat ordered by mistake in a restaurant. When a Catholic is a guest in a private home and meat is served on Friday, he is ordinarily bound to abstain from taking any, because the danger of scandal is hardly ever absent. Indeed, some non-Catholic hosts do not hesitate to serve meat on such an occasion with the deliberate purpose of testing the Catholic spirit of the guest.

VOTING FOR A SOCIALIST

Question: May a Catholic cast his ballot for a Socialist who is running for civil office?

Answer: The term "Socialist" is used very broadly nowadays. It might be applied to one who, for practical purposes, is a Communist, or, on the other hand, it might signify that the candidate in question favors certain social measures which are fully within the moral law according to the standards of the Church. Of course, a Catholic could not in conscience vote for a Socialist of the first type, but he would not be forbidden to vote for a man who is designated as a Socialist in the second sense. However, because the *system of Socialism* (understood in its correct sense) is opposed to Catholic teaching, a Catholic would have to be sure that no doctrine of this forbidden system is accepted by a candidate calling himself a Socialist before the Catholic could vote for this individual.

THE ROSARY OVER THE RADIO

Question: Since the response given in *The American Ecclesiastical Review* for July, 1951, declaring that it is doubtful if indulgences can be gained by alternating in the recitation of the rosary broadcast over the radio (that is, the first part of the prayers being

broadcast and the listeners reciting only the second part) I believe a decision has been given on the question by the Holy See. Can you give some information on the matter?

Answer: The *Analecta* of the Dominican Order, April-June, 1953, informs us that in May, 1952, the Procurator General of the Friars Preachers proposed these doubts to the Holy See: "1. Can the faithful gain the indulgences attached to the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary if they recite it with a companion who is present only by radio transmission; and, in the event of an affirmative answer; 2. Can they also gain the aforesaid indulgences if they recite the alternate parts while the part of the prayers which is being transmitted by radio is actually not being recited here and now by any person but was previously recorded on a disk or a wire or other instrument?"

The answer, given by the Sacred Penitentiary on May 9, 1952, was "Affirmative to the first part, negative to the second." In other words, when Catholics recite the alternate parts of a broadcast rosary, they can gain the indulgences if there is a living person actually broadcasting; but if the broadcast portion is a transcription previously made, the indulgences cannot be gained by alternate recitation. It should be added, however, that when the rosary is broadcast in this second way, the listeners can gain the indulgences if they themselves recite the prayers *entirely*, or even alternately *among themselves*.

A MARRIAGE PROBLEM

Question: John, a Catholic, wishes to marry Mary, divorced civilly from a man she married before a justice of the peace in 1940. Mary was the child of a Catholic mother and a Protestant father. She was baptized a Catholic but brought up a Protestant because her mother died when Mary was an infant. May John marry Mary?

Answer: From the evidence presented it would seem that Mary's marriage in 1940 was a valid union. For she was one of those whom Canon 1099, § 2, declared not bound by the canonical form of matrimony in a marriage with a non-Catholic (*ab acatholicis nati, etsi in Ecclesia catholica baptizati, qui ab infantili aetate in haeresi vel schismate aut infidelitate vel sine ulla religione adole-*

verunt). Since Jan. 1, 1949, the obligation of observing the canonical form has extended to such persons also, but this change does not affect the marital status of those who had married previously. Hence, as long as Mary's husband is alive she is prohibited by the impediment of *ligamen* from marrying John. The only possible way in which she could be freed from this impediment during the lifetime of her husband would be a privilege *in favorem fidei*, which the Holy See might grant if it were established that Mary's husband was *certainly* unbaptized, or even if he were baptized since the termination of their conjugal life (*matrimonium consummatum et ratum, sed postea non consummatum*).

FRANCIS J. CONNELL, C.SS.R.

Analecta

The first issue of the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* for 1953 contains the important Encyclical to the Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops and other local Ordinaries of the Oriental Church in union with Rome.[1] In this Encyclical, after reviewing the tribulations which the peoples of those Rites have undergone and are undergoing even now, the Holy Father offers words of encouragement, assurances of his own prayers, and expresses a desire that all Bishops and priests in their daily Masses remember those of their brethren who, far from their own temples and their own flocks, are unable to approach the altar to offer the Holy Sacrifice.

That same number of the *Acta* contains the Apostolic Constitution on the new rules regarding the Eucharistic Fast,[2] together with the Instruction of the Holy Office in this regard.[3] It also contains the Holy Father's Christmas Radio Message in which he spoke of the Christian Christmas as the great hope of salvation, but called again to men's minds the sorrowful crowd of the poor and the oppressed of the earth. It was in this message that he reminded men that salvation cannot come only from production and organization. He set forth two fundamental concepts of the salvific work of God and scored two false ways proposed for man's salvation. He warned, however, that social life cannot be constructed after the fashion of a gigantic industrial machine, and lamented the tendency to "depersonalize" modern man. He pointed out in detail the effects of the various ways in which the human person is no longer recognized, and urged instead a realization of the reciprocal solidarity of men and peoples. Treating of the sufferings of conscience in modern society, he spoke of the question of birth-control and of the problem of emigration, of oppression and persecution, and the sufferings of the poor. In this connection he recalled the example of Jesus in dealing with the poor and the

[1] *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 45 (1953), 5.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

various ways in which during his pontificate he had tried to aid the poor, and closed with an exhortation to all to aid personally in helping the poor.[4]

The second number for 1953 contains the proceedings of the Consistory held Jan. 12, 1953.[5] In the secret Consistory were published the names of the new Cardinals, among them His Eminence James Francis McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles. Likewise published were the names of those who had previously been named Archbishops or Bishops. In the public Consistory, Jan. 15, 1953,[6] the red hats were imposed upon the new Cardinals. Thereafter in a secret Consistory[7] occurred the ceremonies of the "closing of the mouth" and the "opening of the mouth" and the assignment of the Cardinals' titles.

The Apostolic Constitution, *Grave sane officium,* constituting the new province of Kansas City in Kansas, cut off from the province of St. Louis, issued Aug. 9, 1951, appears in the fourth number.[8] An Apostolic Letter of Feb. 21, 1953, announces the creation of an Internuntiature in Syria.[9] The Letter to the children of the Catholic schools of the United States appealing for their charity toward the needy children of other nations also appears in the fourth number.[10]

The allocution to those attending the international convention on psychotherapy and psychology, held in Rome, appears in the sixth number.[11] In that same number is also an allocution to the Christian workingmen gathered May 1 in Rome.[12]

The Decree of the Holy Office declaring Rev. Leonard Feeney excommunicated appears in the second number.[13] The same Holy Office issued a decree proscribing a book, *Les événements et la foi 1940-1952* (Jeunesse de l'Eglise).[14]

The Sacred Consistorial Congregation announced the appointment of Most Rev. Lawrence B. Casey as titular Bishop of Cea and Auxiliary Bishop of Rochester, Feb. 10, 1953.[15] It also issued

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 65.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 86.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 87.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 166.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 225.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 179.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 278.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 290.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 100.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 185.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 186.

a decree regarding the meetings of the Bishops, the "Catholic Welfare Organization," in the Philippines.[16]

The Sacred Congregation of the Council issued a letter concerning the lending of material conserved in the ecclesiastical archives in Italy.[17] The Sacred Congregation of Rites issued a rescript on the invocations to be recited at the end of Mass and at Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.[18] This rescript was later corrected so that "Blessed be her glorious Assumption" comes after "Blessed be her holy and immaculate conception."[19] An indult from the Sacred Congregation of Rites permits the use of the vernacular (Italian) in the interrogations and responses in the administration of Baptism.[20]

The Sacred Penitentiary announces the concession of an indulgence of five hundred days, to be gained once a day, by those who carry a Rosary properly blessed and who kissing it say devoutly the first part of the "Hail Mary," mentally.[21]

The Pontifical Commission for the Codification of the Oriental Law gave authentic interpretations of Oriental canons 85; 72, § 1, n. 6; 151, § 1,[22] 18, § 2; 31; 32, § 5; 85, § 2; 86, § 1, n. 2; 88, § 3.[23] The decisions of the Sacred Roman Rota are also reported.[24]

The Secretariate of State announced the following appointments:[25]

Bishop Assistant "al Soglio Pontificio":

Jan. 9, 1953, Most Rev. Martin J. O'Connor, titular Bishop of Thespia.

Protonotary Apostolic ad instar participantium:

Nov. 14, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. Leo G. Fink, Fenton J. Fitzpatrick, and Thomas F. McNally, of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

June 10, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Roman Nuwer, of the Diocese of Buffalo.

Dec. 15, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. Anthony Scarpati, Louis Stickney, and William Toolen, of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

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[16] *Ibid.*, p. 247.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 101.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 194.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 251.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 195.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 311.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 104.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 312.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 329.
[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 106; 152; 202; 254; 314.

Dec. 29, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgr. George Connor, of the Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts.

Jan. 20, 1953, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Bernard Weber, of the Diocese of Sioux Falls.

Domestic Prelates:

Aug. 25, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. John E. Kuhn, of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati; Nicholas T. Elko, of the apostolic exarchate for the Ruthenians of Byzantine rite of Podocarpathia in the United States.

Aug. 29, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. James G. Cann, Charles L. Elslander, John Mullins, and John G. O'Looney, of the Diocese of St. Augustine; Michael J. Byrne, Edward Hannon, and Malachy O'Sullivan, of the Diocese of San Diego.

Sept. 30, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. Alphonse Bertele, and Vincent Borkowicz, of the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Nov. 14, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. Alphonse Baum, James A. Boylan, John L. Boyle, Charles P. Bruehl, John P. Connery, Joseph G. Cox, Edward F. Cunnie, Philip E. Donahue, Scott A. Fasig, Howard R. Flood, Joseph A. Gorham, John T. Green, Francis J. Hertkorn, Peter J. Klekotka, Joseph W. McCaffrey, Charles B. McGinley, Newton T. Miller, Cornelius V. O'Brien, Joseph P. O'Donnell, Michael Pasto, George Petro, Edward M. Reilly, Ignatius Valanciunas and John N. Wachter, of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Nov. 18, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. Herbert G. Egbring, George G. O'Bryan, and Charles A. Towell, of the Diocese of Covington; Paul A. Gieringer, Roy C. Keffer, Dennis P. Reardon, Lawrence F. Schott and John F. Stanton, of the Diocese of Harrisburg.

Dec. 1, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. John Coady, Walter Hayes, Joseph Moran and Jerome Winter, of the Archdiocese of Washington.

Dec. 15, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. John Cody, Joseph Grellner and Anthony Meyers, of the Diocese of Dodge City.

Dec. 29, 1952, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. Walter C. Connell, John Harrington, Eugene Marshall, John O'Connell, and Jeremiah Sheehan, of the Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts.

Jan. 10, 1953, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Fredrick W. Freking, of the Diocese of Winona.

Feb. 1, 1953, Rt. Rev. Msgrs. Massimo Benso, Edward Brady, Patrick Healy, Thomas McCarthy, Thomas Morris, and William E. North, of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Feb. 10, 1953, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Houlahan, of the Archdiocese of Dubuque.

Secret Chamberlains Supernumerary:

Dec. 1, 1952, Very Rev. Msgrs. Robert Arthur, Philip Hannan, and Russell A. Phelan, of the Archdiocese of Washington.

Dec. 29, 1952, Very Rev. Msgrs. Joseph Sullivan, of the Diocese of Rochester; Casimir Bickauskas of the Diocese of Fort Wayne.

Feb. 1, 1953, Very Rev. Msgr. Henry Trower, of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Mar. 9, 1953, Very Rev. Msgrs. Gerald McDevitt, of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia; John Cain, of the Archdiocese of Newark.

Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, civil class:

Feb. 1, 1953, Messrs. Francis Doherty, Francis Dougherty, Thomas Hickey, Paul J. McCormick, of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Knight of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, civil class:

Aug. 29, 1952, Messrs. Mario F. Biane, William P. Mahedy, William R. Sidenfaden, and Martin M. Smith, of the Diocese of San Diego.

Nov. 10, 1952, Mr. Walter Scott, of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

Dec. 9, 1952, Messrs. John Bogan, Edward Dosek, William Deiger, Dan Riley, and William Splain, of the Diocese of Lincoln.

Great Cross of the Order of Pope St. Silvester:

Dec. 15, 1952, Mr. Walter J. Donnelly.

Commander of the Order of Pope St. Silvester:

Nov. 29, 1951, Mr. Henry Amiel.

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Book Reviews

CHRIST, THE IDEAL OF THE PRIEST. By Abbot Marmion, O.S.B. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1952. Pp. 240. $4.50.

Like other books of Dom Marmion, this one is compiled from his notes. It was planned as a crown to his celebrated trilogy, but since the editing was done after his death it does not have the benefit of his revision. The anonymous editor, however, has done an excellent piece of work. Throughout the book the concept is smoothly and logically developed, and it is so fully in the spirit of the previous works of Dom Marmion that if some parts of it be original to the editor this reviewer would certainly like to read a book of his straight authorship.

The book is one which fulfills the specifications of even a hard-boiled, busy pastor such as the reviewer, for it is not only deeply spiritual but likewise extremely practical, dealing with problems that arise in the spiritual development of any priest, be he contemplative or drivingly active. It provides admirable spiritual reading and is well adapted to the simple read-and-reflect type of meditation, so helpful for the easily distracted.

Starting, as the title would indicate, with the Priesthood of Christ, it treats of Christ the model and living source of priestly sanctity, and then drives it home with *sacerdos alter christus*. This last factor is heavily stressed throughout. Thus the author begins the chapter on The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Priest: "Mary is Queen and Mother of all Christians. She is in a special manner Queen and Mother of priests. Because of their resemblance to her divine Son, Our Lady sees Jesus in each one of them." One of many thoughts that will make a priest revere his high calling and try to live up to it.

In Part II, A—The Priestly Virtues—are illuminating steps through faith, repentance, humility and obedience, to the virtues of religion, love of God and of fellowman. Then in Part II, B, the author ascends into three chapters on the Mass, the Perfect Sacrifice—that consecrated heritage of priesthood alone. This is the climax of the book, and why it is addressed to priests, *sacerdos in aeternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech*.

After this height, the author drops gently to the plateau of priestly devotion. The Office, the priest as a man of living prayer, his faith in the Holy Ghost, sanctification by means of ordinary action, the

Blessed Virgin and the priest, the Transfiguration. It is like coming down from the mountains to the everyday plain, when the book is laid aside and everyday work must be resumed. Yet there is a lingering exaltation of the heights to help and inspire in daily life when the work has been given its due attention.

The chapter on sanctification by means of ordinary actions is not as strong as the others—and quite naturally. Dom Marmion was a contemplative and preferred to go directly to the spiritual rather than through the material. However, man is a creature composed of body and soul and, while in this life, the two must work together. St. John Chrysostom brings out this aspect in the lessons of the Sunday within the Octave of Corpus Christi; and God Himself made it plain when St. Peter was told: "That which God hath cleansed do not thou call common."

An extended treatise on the eternal value of everyday works could be a work of inestimable service for many priests.

But Dom Marmion could not deal with everything and this particular lack is a small matter in a book of such excellence. His regular readers will rejoice in this new work, and it will serve as a fruitful introduction for those who have missed him to date.

H. D. BUCHANAN

FATHER HECKER AND HIS FRIENDS: STUDIES AND REMINISCENCES. By Joseph McSorley, C.S.P. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Company, 1952. Pp. xxv + 304. $3.95.

This volume is most happy in its author and in its scope. One misses the point unless he observes the sub-title and author's foreword which reads, "The following pages contain things he has read, heard and observed with regard to the ten men who may be described as the first generation of the Paulist Fathers." The man undertaking this project already known as an historian and beloved as a spiritual writer is qualified further by having known all but two of the founders and five other members out of the 252 who have been members of the community.

This work is divided into three parts and carries its documentation after each of these sections rather than in footnotes. After a sketch of the American Catholic background the author launches into the story of Hecker and his convert associates, who as Redemptorists began to give English speaking missions especially through the South. Then he tells calmly of the departure of Hecker and his friends to form the new Congregation of St. Paul in 1857. In the case of Fr. Clarence

Walworth who was with the Paulists and later left them Fr. McSorley has a chance to show his keen understanding of human nature. The Paulist work in pulpit and press and a wonderful chapter on Hecker's message are followed by sketches of the Hecker-Brownson relationship, Elliott, Hewit, and Deshon. This book is an interesting addition to the story of American Catholicism and in neglected areas of the history of mission-preaching, the development of devotions, the story of big city parishes, and the lives of important churchmen who were never bishops. The writer has done something that is considered the latest in biography, for scholars are concluding that not just a man by himself should be the subject of a study but that he should be looked at in the context of his family, even of several generations, or examined in the setting of his contemporary associates. Certainly religious founders will be seen more realistically if they are surrounded as Fr. Hecker has been by their co-operators.

The faults of this book are those of reminiscences. If one forgets "Studies" in the title the uneven documentation will be easily overlooked. So much, even of quotations, is left unaccounted for that it might be hoped that the Paulist archives, for the sake of the future researcher, might preserve a fully annotated copy. The chapter on the Paulists and the American Catholic scene of the late nineteenth century seems out of place before one on Hecker and Brownson. The claim for the first organized mission in 1857 in New York City may need some re-examination, perhaps only semantically, for Bishop Rosati was speaking of such in St. Louis in the 1830's. Archbishop Francis P. Kenrick's feelings, it might be shown, were more strongly and uniquely anti-Paulist than is brought out.

It is hoped that a thorough biography of Isaac Hecker is in the offing and that it will profit from the understanding shown here by Fr. McSorley. Any American priest would profit from reading this story of the great and goodly company of men who did so much to form a tradition in which he lives.

HENRY J. BROWNE

DIE LEHRE VON GOTT, ERSTER BAND. VON DER ERKENNBARKEIT, VOM WESEN, UND VON DEN VOLLKOMMENHEITEN GOTTES. By Johannes Brinktrine. Paderborn: Schoeningh, 1953. Pp. 298. Paper, DM 12; Cloth, DM 14,80.

This work is a sound and attractive exposition of the treatise *De Deo Uno*, written, as the author declares in his preface, according to the principles of St. Thomas as required by the Code of Canon Law (CIC 1366, 2). The text is followed by an appendix of 33 pages,

presenting the philosophical proofs of God's existence. There are three indexes containing personal names, subjects, and Greek as well as Hebrew terms. The book is well printed on good paper.

The volume under review is the third in a projected series of nine, which will cover the entire field of dogmatic theology. Two volumes previously published contain the treatises on revelation and the Church, and a separate fascicle, also published prior to the present volume, contains the introduction to dogmatic theology. In size and general outline the new volume is comparable to the same treatise in the ninth edition of Pohle's first volume. It is designed as a general study of its subject for those equipped with a knowledge of scholastic philosophy, hermeneutics, and Biblical languages, and it achieves its goal with notable success.

Since numerous treatises of this type are available in various languages, it is pertinent to inquire into the claims of the present work justifying its publication. Though the author laments that much of his material was destroyed during the recent war, his book possesses several distinctive characteristics that will recommend it to a wide audience. In the section devoted to the study of the nature of God, there is an unusually ample discussion of the names of God contained in revelation as well as in the natural religions of various peoples, and here considered as clues leading to a knowledge of the perfection of His nature (69-86). This section will be particularly appreciated by readers familiar with the Hebrew language and with the comparative study of religion. The theophanies recorded in the Old and New Testament also are studied in considerable detail (86-106). In the exposition of the Catholic doctrine eastern and western liturgies are frequently used as source material in addition to the formal doctrinal pronouncements of the Church. The book contains no general bibliography, but the sectional bibliographies concluding the various topics treated in the course of the work are abundant and well chosen. The great majority of them are references to German books and periodicals. Only three American (one of them Protestant) and the same number of British entries in English were noted.

Without detracting in any way from the conspicuous merits of this work, the reviewer may be permitted to point out some desiderata. The details of St. Thomas' organization in reference to the divine attributes have been abandoned in favor of a more recent order of topics that possesses no comparable merit. The Thomistic meaning of various terms, such as immensity, presence, and omnipresence, has been blurred. The author's preferred reference list of theologians, chronologically ranging from Kleutgen to Premm, recurs at least forty-six times in the book. If this repetition had been avoided by an appropriate

remark where this list is first assembled (23), space would have been available for additional and necessary references to St. Thomas. In a professedly Thomistic treatise references to all the capital works of the Angelic Doctor are expected to complement the *Summa*, which is the only work of the saint entered in the bibliographies. Without the information supplied by other works of St. Thomas, the reader lacks many details of his teaching which are indispensable for an adequate understanding of the *Summa*. The principal writings of the most important Thomists might also be adduced with specific references to show the continuity of the Thomist tradition. In presenting the patristic proof of the Catholic doctrine, the testimony of the Fathers speaking as witnesses of the Faith should be clearly distinguished from their personal theological doctrines, however weighty the latter may be. This is often a difficult matter, which cannot be committed to the tender mercies of inexpert minds. All quotations from the Fathers should be supplied with precise references to a standard edition in order to facilitate the reader's examination of their context, and his control of the translations in which they are often presented. Unwary readers should be informed that Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch* is distinctly Protestant in character despite its eminent qualities, its often matchless erudition, and its limited listing of Catholic studies. Other German Catholic writers have found this warning necessary. The proofs of God's existence (248-280) should be left to philosophy, as the author has done in the case of such other matters as the philosophical aspects of ontologism (66) and the nature of evil (210).

These counsels of perfection do not detract from the great and evident merits of Brinktrine's work. It is a reliable, clear, and eminently readable exposition of the classic treatise *De Deo Uno*, written by a distinguished scholar, who is also a pedagogue of long experience.

LEO F. MILLER

CHRISTIAN ETHICS. By Rev. Leo R. Ward, C.S.C. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1952. Pp. 298. $4.00.

Here is a really up-to-date work on ethics. Too often ethical doctrine is presented in such a way that it seems like a revelation from on high which has little or nothing to do with modern life and its problems. No one can accuse this work of such a fault. The author begins with an explanation of the nature of an ethical problem. He proceeds to the determinants or causes of the moral order, and discusses the end of man according to Aristotle and then according to Christian philosophy. After treating some of the factors that have shaped modern conduct and moral theory, he launches into the fundamental theme of his